

6/24/99

p 115

Ancient Philosophers (On Moral Business)

similarities betw philosophy + religion, both seek a :

- 1) basic understanding of the nature & character of ultimate reality
- 2) valid principles to guide thought & action

d.fts

- phil. believes in the innate capacity of human reason & imagination to understand reality
- rel. believes humans best understand their innate capacities when acknowledging, by faith, dependence on a moral or spiritual reality that is neither fully grasped by human reason nor constructed by human imagination
- phil. focuses on human wisdom;
rel. focuses on divine reality

2 integrative ways of thinking in Greco-Roman world

1. philosophical theology - arrangement, analysis & critical assessment of claims about the nature of creation and its Creator
2. theological ethics - analysis of patterns of human relations, decision making, and action that are ^{true}right (deon), ^{just}good (teleo), and fitting/just (ethological).

theol. wants to know what is ultimately true;
ethics wants to know what is ultimately just

David Miller
279-0276

PH302

Instructor: E. Springsted
Fall, 1998

Prolegomenon to Theology

Required Texts: D. Allen, *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*; D. Allen & E. Springsted, *Primary Readings in Philosophy for Understanding Theology*; E. Springsted, *Spirituality and Theology*. Plato, *Symposium*. *Exposition and Commentary*. A Festsch. 11

Course Outline:

A. ANCIENT

Weeks 1-3: Plato

F - read Plato's *Republic*
✓ M-W *Timaeus*
F Henderson essay

Readings:

Selections on Plato in *Primary Readings*
Plato, *Symposium*
✓ Introduction, Chps. 1, 2 in *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*
Henderson, Burrell essays in *Spirituality and Theology*

Week 4: Stoicism, Neoplatonism, Augustine

Readings:

✓ Chp. 3 in *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*.
✓ Springsted essay in *Spirituality and Theology*.

Week 5: Aristotle:

Readings:

Selections in Aristotle in *Primary Readings*.
✓ Chps. 4&5 in *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*.

Weeks 6-7: Medieval Theology:

Readings:

Selections in Anselm, Aquinas in *Primary Readings*.
✓ Chp. 6 in *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*.
Hebblethwaite essay in *Spirituality and Theology*.

Exam: November 9

B. MODERN

Weeks 7-8: Descartes

Readings:

Selections in Descartes in *Primary Readings*.
✓ Chp. 7, & [Chp. 8, pp. 171-181] in *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*.

11/14, 11/18

Week 9: Locke:

Readings:

Selections in Locke in *Primary Readings*.

Chp. 8, pp. 181-186 in *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*.

11/30
12/2

Week 10: Hume:

Readings:

Selections in Hume in *Primary Readings*.

Chp. 8, pp. 186-202 in *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*.

Eaton essay in *Spirituality and Theology*.

Week 11: Kant:

Readings:

Selections in Kant in *Primary Readings*.

Chp. 9 *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*.

Week 12: Post-Kant:

Readings:

Selections in Hegel, Kierkegaard and Wittgenstein in *Primary Readings*.

Chp. 10 & 11, *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*.

Hauerwas essay in *Spirituality and Theology*.

Reserve Books:

good
for
ancient
philosophy

- (1) A.H. Armstrong & R.A. Markus, *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy*
- (2) A. H. Armstrong (ed.), *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*
3. Michael Foster, *Mystery and Philosophy*
- (4) A. Kenney et al., *Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*
- 5 D. Allen, *Christian Belief in a Postmodern World*.

Requirements:

1. Attendance and participation in precepts

2. Mid-term exam - Nov 9th

3. Final Exam.

The final exam is weighted roughly twice that of the midterm. Grades will reflect participation.

Department of Religion
Princeton University
RELIGION 502: FALL 1998
PHILOSOPHY AND THE STUDY OF RELIGION

Instructor

Jeffrey Stout
Rm. 241, 1879 Hall
258-4485

Course Description

This is a seminar in the philosophy of religious studies. It is also a seminar on the philosophy in religious studies. It is intended solely for, and required of, first- and second-year graduate students in the department.

The philosophy of religious studies: this implies simply that the course is an occasion for us to reflect on what we and our colleagues are doing when we interpret religious language and behavior. The philosophy *in* religious studies: this means that the course investigates the influence certain philosophical assumptions and vocabularies have had in our field.

For some students the course will provide an introduction to the confusing array of isms encountered nowadays in debates over theory and method in the humanities and social sciences. Like it or not, talk of relativism, nihilism, reductionism, pragmatism, hermeneutics, genealogy, deconstruction, discourse, power, the "subject," and the "Other" is all around us. Some degree of jargon-literacy is needed to understand one's colleagues in the discipline. The reading assignments include some writings that are dense with technical terms. Try not to be intimidated by this. I do not expect you to enjoy or admire all the readings. Indeed, I would be surprised and disappointed if you did. But it is essential to the aims of the course to expose you to a few especially difficult samples: first, to let you practice swimming in high waters when there is a lifeguard on duty; and second, to let you experience contrasts among different styles of thought currently competing for your allegiance and attention.

For students already familiar with various contemporary dialects of academese, and perhaps committed to one or another ism now in fashion, the course offers an opportunity to think about the issues a little more deeply and to ask some questions about the practices and institutions to which we lend our energies as students of religion. The course is designed, then, not only for those who profess little understanding of the current theoretical vocabularies but also for students who feel confident that they have surveyed the options, understood them quite well, and adopted the methodology (or antimethodological attitude) best suited to their work. To the former group, the course is a guide for the perplexed. To the latter, it is an opportunity to test one's grasp of the terms as well as the adequacy of one's conclusions.

It is one thing to fall in love with a method, another thing to understand it well enough to explain it to a college student. Let this be the standard of comprehensibility, and thus of comprehension, we set for ourselves. The thought of teaching, like the gallows, has a way of focusing the mind.

The course makes absolutely no concessions to the existence of subfields in the study of religion. It assumes without apology that every graduate student in religion ought to be familiar with contemporary debates over how, if at all, to define religion and over how best to interpret religious texts, rituals, and traditions. Much of what you do at Princeton will take place either in a subfield or in an interdisciplinary program where subfields in adjacent departments overlap: East Asian Studies, Ancient World, Human Values, Political Philosophy, Center for the Study of

American Religion, the Davis Center, the Moses Archive. This course is not one where specialized interests (like a geographical area or a historical period) define the materials to be studied or where methodological insignia (like "analytic philosopher" or "feminist historian") delimit the range of questions to be asked. Please check your subfield designations at the door.

If all goes well, you will before long defend your dissertation proposal, undergo a final public oral examination, and then perhaps teach "Introduction to the Study of Religion" in a religion department somewhere. On such occasions, you will find yourself in a conversation defined by common interest in the interpretation of religious texts, practices, and traditions. The question, "What does this have to do with religion?" is always in order in this context, as are all sorts of questions about your choices of vocabulary and approach. Not the least of these will be, "So what?" and "Why should the rest of us, outside your little clique of specialists, care?" Now is the time to begin thinking about these questions in relation to your own work--but just to begin. The conversation will keep going, and you will have many opportunities to deepen your understanding and to change your mind.

You will find that the conversation is constantly doubling back on itself, finding each of its framing concepts (interpretation, religion, ritual, and so on) troublesome and questionable. Somehow the conversation has repeatedly survived redefinition of its focal terms and much discord over the point of being interested. Evidently, it does not depend on prior agreement about the essence its subject matter or the method to be employed. For the conversation is often an argument or struggle over what the conversation ought to be about and the very terms in which it should be conducted. This course prepares you for membership in that conversation, a place in that argument. It does so by throwing you into the middle of it and inviting you to acquire an identity of your own. With any luck, we will build a little community along the way.

Opportunities and Requirements

All students are expected to read the assigned material carefully and to come to class prepared to say something about it--above all, to ask questions, the more specific the better, about what doesn't make sense. Students may volunteer to lead off the seminar discussion of a particular week's readings by making a 15-minute presentation. In place of a paper, each student is required to prepare three course syllabi: one for a general course intended for undergraduates majoring in religion, a second for an advanced course in your own area, and a third for a graduate course like this one (that is, not restricted to a subfield). The rationale for this assignment and the criteria for successful completion of it will be discussed in class. The due date is January 16.

Course Plan and Reading Assignments

All required texts have been ordered at Micawber's on Nassau Street. The Caws volume, however, will not be available for several weeks. A packet of photocopied assignments will be made available before week 4. Required readings are in bold print. The other readings listed are recommended only and have not been placed on reserve.

1. Sept. 18: Organizational Meeting
2. Sept. 25: Feuerbach, Projection Theory, and Naturalism
Van Harvey, *Feuerbach and the Interpretation of Religion*.

Harvey's treatment of the charge of reductionism draws on Wayne Proudfoot, *Religious Experience*. His treatment of "the hermeneutics of suspicion" draws on Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy*, pp. 20-36, 494-551. For a historical discussion of naturalism as a tradition of inquiry in the study of religion, see J. Samuel Preus, *Explaining Religion: Criticism and Theory from Bodin to Freud*. The essay most responsible for provoking recent controversy over reductive

naturalism in religious studies is Robert Segal, "In Defense of Reductionism," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 51 (March 1983), 97-124. For a restatement of Segal's position and responses to it, see Thomas Idinopulos and Edward Yonan (eds.), *Religion and Reductionism: Essays on Eliade, Segal, and the Challenge of the Social Sciences for the Study of Religion*.

3. Oct. 2: Phenomenology

Introduction and entries by Otto, Scheler, Christ, Earle, Sekida, Dupre, Arthur, Kristensen, Kitigawa, Eliade, Ricoeur, Westphal, and Bynum in Sumner B. Twiss and Walter H. Conser, Jr. (eds.), *Experience of the Sacred*, pp. 1-199, 224-37, 249-72.

We will focus primarily on the introduction's attempt to distinguish three "voices" or phases in the development of phenomenology as an approach to the study of religion, all of which draw upon Edmund Husserl's philosophy. For samples of Husserl's philosophical prose, see the Husserl entries in Kurt Mueller-Vollmer (ed.), *The Hermeneutics Reader*, pp. 165-86. For a brief introduction to Husserl's work, see chapter 5 in Robert C. Solomon, *From Rationalism to Existentialism*. The most influential phenomenologist of religion in the U.S. remains Mircea Eliade, whom Twiss and Conser place in the second phase. For recent, sympathetic overviews of Eliade, see Bryan S. Rennie, *Reconstructing Eliade* and David Cave, *Mircea Eliade's Vision for a New Humanism*. For a less sympathetic perspective, see the passages on Eliade in the book by McCutcheon assigned for week 12. The philosophical impetus for what Twiss and Conser call the third phase derives largely from Paul Ricoeur, whose voluminous work can be sampled in Mario J. Valdes (ed.), *A Ricoeur Reader* and John B. Thomson (ed.), *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*.

4. Oct. 9: Hermeneutics

Robert Brandom, "Heidegger's Categories in *Being and Time*" (packet).
Heidegger and Gadamer entries in *The Hermeneutics Reader*, pp. 214-92.
Charles Taylor, "Comparison, History, Truth" (packet).

The best book-length commentary on the relevant sections of *Being and Time* is Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*. Fans of Pierre Bourdieu will find Dreyfus's explanations of the Heidegger-Bourdieu connection illuminating. The standard introduction to Gadamer is David Hoy's *The Critical Circle*.

5. Oct. 16: Critical Theory

David M. Rasmussen, "Critical Theory and Philosophy" (packet).
Marsha Aileen Hewitt, *Critical Theory of Religion: A Feminist Analysis*.
Habermas entry in *The Hermeneutics Reader*, 293-319.
Raymond Geuss, "Critical Theory" (packet).

For applications of Habermasian critical theory to issues in religious ethics, see Dennis P. McCann and Charles R. Strain, *Polity and Praxis*. For an extended dialogue between a Gadamerian and a critical theorist, see David Hoy and Thomas McCarthy, *Critical Theory*. Nancy Fraser's critique of Habermas appears in chapter 6 of her book, *Unruly Practices*. Seyla Benhabib's *Situating the Self* attempts to adjust Habermas' version of critical theory to make room for feminist, communitarian, and postmodern concerns. We will return to Fraser and Benhabib in week 11.

6. Oct. 23: Structuralism

Peter Caws, *Structuralism: A Philosophy for the Human Sciences*, pp. 1-165, 237-59. In this course we consider structuralism as "a philosophy for the human sciences" and as a target of criticism from writers like Foucault, Derrida, and Fraser. Religion 501 considers empirical contributions to religious studies in the context of social theory. For an analysis of structuralism that is less sympathetic than Caws', see Philip Pettit, *The Concept of Structuralism*.

7. Oct. 30: Genealogy and Deconstruction
 Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*.
 Richard J. Bernstein, "Foucault: Critique as a Philosophic Ethos" (packet).
 Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences" (packet).
 Kevin Hart, "The Status of Deconstruction" (packet).

Edward Said's *Orientalism*, a book that has had considerable influence on religious studies, relies heavily on the notion of a discourse developed in Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and *Discipline and Punish*. Said situates his own "secular criticism" in relation to Foucault and Derrida in *The World, the Text, and the Critic*. For examples of "genealogical" approaches to religious topics, see Marilyn Chapin Massey, *Feminine Soul: The Fate of an Ideal*; Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*; and Mark D. Jordan, *The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology*. A new book by Alexander Nehamas, *The Art of Living*, includes an illuminating discussion of Foucault's later work. See also John Rajchman, *Truth and Eros*, for helpful treatments of Foucault and Lacan. For representative critiques of Foucault, see David Hoy (ed.) *Foucault: A Critical Reader*. The leading interpreter of Derrida and deconstruction in religious studies is Mark C. Taylor, the author of such works as *Altarity* and *Erring*. Kevin Hart's *The Trespass of the Sign*, from which the Hart assignment is excerpted, offers a useful corrective to Taylor's reading of Derrida.

Midterm Break

8. Nov 13: The New Traditionism
 Alasdair MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*
 Louis A. Ruprecht, Jr. "After Virtue? On Distorted Philosophical Narrative" (packet).

MacIntyre's most famous work is *After Virtue*. MacIntyre's leading follower within religious studies is the Duke theologian, Stanley Hauerwas. For a feminist critique of MacIntyre, see Susan Moller Okin, *Justice, Gender, and the Family*, chapter 3. For arguments against MacIntyre's depiction of modernity, see Jeffrey Stout, "Homeward Bound" (available from instructor on request). For wide-ranging critiques of the traditional-modern distinction, see the entirety of Ruprecht's *Afterwords* and Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*.

9. Nov. 20: Contemporary Pragmatism
 Richard Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth*, pp. 1-17, 113-161, 175-222.
 Cornel West, *The American Evasion of Philosophy*, esp. Introduction, chs. 2, 3, 5, and 6.
 William D. Hart, "Cornel West: Between Rorty's Rock and Hauerwas's Hard Place" (handout to be made available).
 Tom Cohen, "The 'Genealogies' of Pragmatism" (packet).

Rorty's magnum opus is *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. His most recent collection of essays is *Truth and Progress*. For a recent restatement of some pragmatic themes revived by Rorty, see Robert Brandom's massive book, *Making It Explicit*. Rorty's pragmatism is a kind of nonreductive naturalism. For a critique of Rorty, see Jeffrey Stout, *Ethics after Babel*, part III. West's position, known as prophetic pragmatism, is more congenial than Rorty's is both to the claims of supernaturalistic faith and to the kinds of theory currently identified with the academic left. Hart criticizes West from the vantage point of a kind of naturalism more like George Santayana's than Rorty's. For background, see Henry S. Levinson, *Santayana, Pragmatism, and the Spiritual Life*. Cohen suggests that Rorty and West have helped create "a contemporary ideology" involving "regressive attempts to shore up an iconic humanism, a theology of the self, . . . that implicitly evades the materiality that has always been at stake in the American break."

Thanksgiving Recess

10. Dec. 4: Interpretation, Author's Intention, and Contextual Significance
 David Tracy, "Interpreting the Religious Classic" (packet).
 Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Divine Discourse*, chs. 8-9 (packet).
 Richard Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth*, pp. 78-110, 175-222.
 Richard Rorty, "Pragmatism without Principles" (packet).
 Jeffrey Stout, "What Is the Meaning of a Text?" and "The Relativity of Interpretation" (packet).

Tracy's approach has been influential in religious studies, especially among recent alumni of the University of Chicago Divinity School. The strongest philosophical influence on Tracy's work is that of Paul Ricoeur. Wolterstorff, who teaches at Yale Divinity School, uses speech-act theory to criticize Ricoeur and Derrida and to vindicate authorial-discourse interpretation. The pieces by Rorty and Stout take pragmatic approaches to the topic of interpretation while playing down the need for a single theory of meaning. For classic defenses of the author's intention as the touchstone of interpretive practice, see E.D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* and *The Aims of Interpretation*. For a sophisticated defense of Hirsch's approach, see P.D. Juhl, *Interpretation: An Essay in the Philosophy of Literary Criticism*. For a Gadamerian critique of Hirsch, see David Hoy, *The Critical Circle*. See also the work of Quentin Skinner, a Cambridge historian and political theorist who is responsible for a widely discussed method of interpretation dependent on speech-act theory. His most important papers are included in *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and His Critics*, ed. James Tully.

11. Dec. 11: Some Varieties of Feminist Theory
 Seyla Benhabib et al., *Feminist Contentions*.
 Nancy Fraser, "Structuralism or Pragmatics? On Discourse Theory and Feminist Politics" (packet).
 Jeffrey Stout, "The Critical Theorist and Her Other: Reflections on Benhabib" (packet).

The writings of Carol Christ, Caroline Walker Bynum, and Masha Aileen Hewitt considered in previous assignments already demonstrate that feminism in religious studies can seek articulation in very different philosophical idioms. Here we consider a sampling of answers to the broader question of what kind of philosophy or theory is best suited to the pursuit of feminist aims in humanistic scholarship: Benhabib's version of Habermasian critical theory, Judith Butler's post-structuralism, Drucilla Cornell's combination of themes from Derrida and Lacan, and Fraser's pragmatism. Stout's essay criticizes Benhabib from a point of view closer to Fraser's feminist pragmatism.

12. Dec. 18: Essentialism and the Category of Religion
 Russell T. McCutcheon, *Manufacturing Religion*.
 Rosalind Shaw, "Feminist Anthropology and the Gendering of Religious Studies" (packet).

McCutcheon describes himself as a naturalist. He mentions Foucault and Said--as well as leftist literary critics like Terry Eagleton and Frederic Jameson--as influences on his work. Shaw is an anthropologist who thinks that feminists like Carol Christ fail to distance themselves sufficiently from Eliade's tendency to reify and isolate religious phenomena. Both authors want to unmask the motives and effects of essentialism in what McCutcheon calls "the discourse on sui generis religion." See also Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, chapter 1.

9/16/98

Prolegomenen - Eric Springsted

What we're Doing & why

Philosophical Contributions to Kin Theory

- early Xus borrowed esp. from Plato, and later Aristotle
- it had a sophisticated & necessary vocabulary
e.g. where Xus debated on nature of God

homo oustias
 or being/nature

] - they borrowed this term from Gr. Phil., but not uncritically
- Gr. Phil. was in the air the early Xus breathed
- Greeks worried about the "one/many" problem
 - e.g. came from one source, but having diversity
 - identity & diversity
 - many say the 1st concept of the trinity solved the one/many problem
- phil. systems are so much a reflection of the issues & obs of the times; to pick a "Cartesian" system v. a Kantian system is a false choice

Augustine talked of the church as a
partnership or fellowship w/ the world

Specific Relation betw. Ph.I. and Theol

(early gnosticism in Cor. church)

1. 1 Cor 2 - Paul enveighs against the wisdom of this world (esp. philosophy) against foolishness of X [phil. pursuit splits the church]
2. Irenaeus Against All Heresies (2c.) - points out the foolishness of gnosticism, whose root is platonic philosophy and speculation, wh/ splits the unity of the church
3. Tertullian - (3c.) - "what does Athens have to do w/ Jerusalem?"

4. Reformed objection to Natural Theology

- Calvin - "unformed faith" - believing just because
^{o-based just on reason}
 s.o. taught it to you (C. says no, personal acceptance of X is req'd)
- Aquinas - proof of God's existence
 then reason leads to belief
- Barth - sharpens the attack on natural theol.
 (i.e. what we know by general reason & observation of the world)
- not analogia entis (being), rather analogia fidei (faith)

Creation -

problem of knowing God by how things are

- God is a person not a principle
- God is free, not bound by our (limited) reason

general experience, reason, comes from w/in this world. Xty argues that God is not part of the world, God created ex nihilo

∴ Barth really disliked philosophy, and natural theology

creator & creature are distinct

- no need to create; an act of grace
- eg. Paul (Rome) defines idolatry of worshipping the creation, not the creator

∴ Xn theology always depends on revelation, and grace of God. It was not a system to deal with reason of being.

- 2nd problem - how do we know this?!

creation thinkers in Hebrew religious dev. probably came up during prophetic period. God must have created the Babylonians, too, not just us. Not a phil. system to answer "where did I come from?"

example of how Xun
use philos. critically;
they were willing to borrow
where similarities existed,
and reject what wasn't helpful

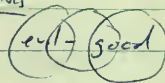
Plato sees creation as ever-evolving, eternal.
Xun has always said no, there is beginning and
an end of creation

Stoics - messed up on idea of God, but a
good moral phil.

* Epicureans - no God, all accidental formation of
atoms

- Augustine's Confessions

- Manichaeism



- the Neo-platonist taught him how to see
God as other-worldly, and see the flaws
of Manichaeism, which freed him to hear

the Xun message

- He saw neo-platonists as "fellow travellers"
at least up to a point.

Hobbes - Philosophy
is a Way of Life

argues that phil. has always
been an attempt to be a
spiritual exercise

Christian Philos. v. other Philosoph

Christian Theology didn't come into being till Middle Ages

view early Xun as being good at inter-religious dialog!

* Different issues from 17th c. (Modern world) on

- Phil. begins to be sth. other than a spiritual quest
eg Descartes who doubts e.th., then tries to
see what the truth is

- theol. is no longer reasonable, because it doesn't
start from reason alone

- ancient philosphi. had more in common w/ Xun theol.
than modern phil.

city-state dominated political philosophy
Plato (Athens)

Tertullian "whether Athens to do with Jerusalem"

- an approach to life

- Dialogues - reflected his ^{engaged} method of inquiry + debate

parallel to
"original
sin"

Q: is human nature basically good or evil? To what
degree can we trust ourselves & our neighbors

Parable of the Rings - a dialogue w/ Glaucon in

The Republic concludes it is the fear of
getting caught that keeps people from sinning

point.

general → particular

- the cure for injustice requires a sense of how the whole is constituted
- S. describes the kinds of persons & activities necessary for society to exist
- there must be politically controlled for the common good
- and philosophers are required to advise & guide rulers to teach what is true & just

"The Sun, the Line & the Cave", The Republic
Glaucon

"Timaeus" - cosmology - study of the principles of nature
- creation - order out of chaos (not ex nihilo)
- nature of God: good
- soul is where reason is located
- links the morality of The Republic with the order of the natural world

Plato (427-347 BC) ^{moral development}

1) Responding to whom &/or what issue?

virtues of the individual correspond to the virtues of the city

1 moral problem - society was ^{relativistic, decaying}

2 political problem - ^{Sparta just defeated Athens (a democracy)}

- creating a just society ^{moral} (understanding what constitutes the whole)
- the common good
- need a philosopher king
- nature of the soul ^{Phaedo} (Sun, Line & Cave)
- the one & the many is a unifying cause
- "to be just is always better than to be unjust"
- the nature of justice & injustice

Plato/Hellenic philosophers interpreted the "wholeness"

Western's present, they accepted God's revolution

Being v. becoming; permanence v. change

• knowledge - sun, light, vision

2) impact or trajectory of their thought to subsequent or modern thinkers & social ethics

virtues (arete) - human excellence
can be taught & acquired

• Plato's forms can be independent of matter ^{idea of the} good is the highest knowledge (Sun, Line & Cave)

• the forms must be matter, sensible

• role of theology in public policy today, just like role of philosophy regarding Plato's rulers

• virtue ethics

uses Plato's epistemology

- hierarchy from matter → soul/spirit: ascension/descension
- Plato's famous trinity: the True, the Good, the Beautiful (Allen 42)
- right decent good teleology fitting ethical
- Descartes's view that the intellect is able to "see" or intuit truth (Allen)
- Plato's dialectic is diff. from Aristotle's logic (Allen 22)
- influenced Alfred North Whitehead & process theology is a variant of Pl's creation & form on Timaeus

3) theological implications

- idea of original sin & need to contain/control it
- "God is perfectly simple & true both inward & deed; he changes not; he deceives not" (124 OMB)

gave rich conceptual tools to articulate doctrines

• nature of transcendent Good (i.e. God) & humanity's relationship to that ultimate reality

• creation (but not ex nihilo) - how & good & perfect being could create & impart goodness w/in a world that is not simply an extension of God; brought order out of chaos

• nature of God - Good: "The Good is One" (Allen 48)

Nature of Jesus ^{human divine} union without confusion

Timaeus

Timaeus



Close

From: DavidMiller@AvodahInstitute.com [SMTP:2millers@email.msn.com]
To: David.Miller@ptsem.edu
Cc:
Subject: FW: Plato
Sent: 3/5/2001 3:42 PM

Importance: Normal

-----Original Message-----

From: 2millers [mailto:2millers@email.msn.com]
Sent: Friday, October 06, 2000 5:21 PM
To: Springsted, Professor Eric
Subject: Re: Plato

I see (if you'll pardon the pun). I've went back and reread that whole section (coming together in 509a) again of the simile of the Sun. In drawing this trinitarian connection, it makes me see grounds for a trinitarian form of ethical thinking: deontological (truth), teleological (the Good), and contextual (beautiful)...

Thanks again!
 D.

----- Original Message -----

From: Springsted, Professor Eric
To: '2millers'
Sent: Friday, October 06, 2000 3:24 PM
Subject: RE: Plato

Well, it's not exactly a quote as such, but he does establish this "trinity" of truth and beauty ruled over by the Good in Bk VI of the Republic (509a)

> -----Original Message-----

> **From:** 2millers [SMTP:2millers@email.msn.com]
 > **Sent:** Friday, October 06, 2000 11:36 AM
 > **To:** Eric.Springsted@ptsem.edu
 > **Subject:** Plato

>

> Eric,

> Seeing you this afternoon prompts me to ask a question about Plato, if you
 > don't mind my imposing. In Allen's book (Philosophy for Understanding
 > Theology, p47) he notes Plato's famous formulation of the True, the Good,
 > and the Beautiful.

>

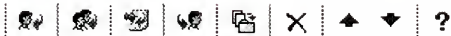
> Can you direct me to the cite or source of that quote?

>

> Thanks!

> David

>



Close

From: DavidMiller@AvodahInstitute.com [SMTP:2millers@email.msn.com]
To: David.Miller@ptsem.edu
Cc:
Subject: FW: Plato and Aristotle...
Sent: 3/5/2001 3:41 PM

Importance: Normal

-----Original Message-----

From: 2millers [mailto:2millers@email.msn.com]
Sent: Tuesday, November 28, 2000 12:01 AM
To: Springsted, Professor Eric
Subject: Re: Plato and Aristotle...

Eric,
Thanks for your reflections and insights.

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Given that the reference refers to wealth and not income, that would seem to cohere with what we were each saying about their dislike of sheer accumulation and their views on distributive justice.

Time for me to go to bed... Plato is pretty neat, but ...!
best,
David

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From: Springsted, Professor Eric
To: '2millers'
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2000 4:27 PM
Subject: RE: Plato and Aristotle...

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Despite that, your observations about distroibutive justice are to the point. Aristotle and Plato were both appalled by those who sought simply to accumulate. And both when they talked about the relative worth to a society of a person did tend to think in terms of improvement of the polity -- materially and morally -- whereas worth for us tends to mean what a person can raise. A baseball player probably is worth \$25 million given the extra tickets, etc. he helps the managment sell. But what is his worth to the society otherwise? Plato and Aristotle would not rank it very high. The question moral improvement etc, does not arise for us when discussing worth in distributive justice. It has always struck me that it is not in the numbers that we deviate most from the ancients but the standards that we use to assess worth.

This probably isn't as informative as you would like, but perhaps helps a bit.

EOS

> -----Original Message-----

> From: 2millers [SMTP:2millers@email.msn.com]

> Sent: Sunday, November 19, 2000 8:16 PM

> To: Eric.Springsted@ptsem.edu

> Subject: Plato and Aristotle...

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> Eric,

> Can I run another philosophy question by you? I read in an article (that
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Close

From: DavidMiller@AvodahInstitute.com [SMTP:2millers@email.msn.com]

To: David.Miller@ptsem.edu

Cc:

Subject: FW: Plato and Aristotle...

Sent: 3/5/2001 3:41 PM

Importance: Normal

-----Original Message-----

From: Springsted, Professor Eric [mailto:eric.springsted@PTSEM.EDU]

Sent: Monday, November 27, 2000 4:27 PM

To: '2millers'

Subject: RE: Plato and Aristotle...

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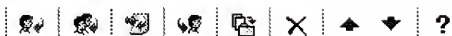
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From: DavidMiller@AvodahInstitute.com [SMTP:2millers@email.msn.com]
 To: David.Miller@ptsem.edu
 Cc:
 Subject: FW: Plato and Aristotle...
 Sent: 3/5/2001 3:40 PM

Importance: Normal

-----Original Message-----

From: Springsted, Professor Eric [mailto:eric.springsted@PTSEM.EDU]
 Sent: Tuesday, November 28, 2000 8:49 AM
 To: '2millers'
 Subject: RE: Plato and Aristotle...

Thanks for updating me on that. And yes, your observations about the differences between wealth and income underlining the Greek view is much to the point. EOS

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PLATO (427-347 BCE)

The Republic - better translated "the political system," the public and political life of a community (we get The Republic from the Latin translation of *politeia*). Waterfield translates as morality, not justice, but it includes justice. Plato loves people but distrusts the masses and power-hungry leaders. Writing during the Athens (democracy) decline and defeat by Sparta (oligarchy).

- Fundamental to his thinking is his distinction what can be grasped by the senses (his ontology) and the intellect (his epistemology), between the world of the sense and the world of the Forms.
- The Form of the Good + the world of Forms plays the same role as the sun in the world of senses. (hence the Sun, the Line, and the Cave). Knowledge is the Good. The Good is One.
- The true the good, and the beautiful (precursors to teleology, deontology, contextual).
"Well, it's not exactly a quote as such, but he does establish this "trinity" of truth and beauty ruled over by the Good in Bk VI of the Republic (509a)" Eric.
- The visible realm is the realm of belief; the intelligible realm is the realm of knowledge.
- The sun consists of an extended analogy between the visible and the invisible realms: just as the sun is the source of light and growth, and is responsible for sight and seeing, and is the acme of the visible world, so goodness is the source of truth and reality, and is responsible for knowledge and knowing, and is the acme of the intelligible realm. Belief, on the other hand, is like partial sight.

Key parts:

- The Parable of the Rings – concludes it is the fear of getting caught that keeps us from doing wrong things
- The Sun, The Line, and The Cave – three ^{analogies} to explain what the Good is like (knowledge; God). We can transform our minds and find truth and knowledge by seeking and living in the light; this is seeking the Good (ie God)
- Issue of the "one and the many" – he seeks unity, a unifying cause
- Plato envisions a political system ruled by philosophers
- The Form of the Good as head of a hierarchy of Forms (middle-Platonists identify the Form of the Good with the Supreme Mind itself, but still the top story of the universe, unlike the Xn God who transcends the universe.)
- Analogy of a craftsman looking to a model and a God (the Good) that is always beyond knowing (contra Aristotle who has not craftsman/model, and no Father who is beyond all finding out). (Allen 36)
- Justice – defines it as giving every man that which is his due (*Republic* I, 331f), per Cicero (*Republic*, p. 199); Cicero was a big fan of Plato.

The overall project is to demonstrate the morality/justice is beneficial to its possessor. An individual gains in happiness in being moral/just even if no external advantages accrue to him. Morality/justice is an assimilation toward God. God is single, uniform, stable, unchanging, and eternal. So an ideally moral/just person must seek the same attributes.

Note that during these times, the Greeks had little notion of the individual, or individual rights; individual happiness was scarcely relevant compared to the state. And the city-states were small, and all men were engaged in the government, like town meetings in New England. Thus the good life was linked to the State. He argues for a mid-ground between oligarchy (tyrannical) and democracy (a free for all).

Waterfield has a controversial thesis, reading the polis as a metaphor for the individual: Plato writes for two layers: the hard aspect of the political life or political philosophy, and the soft aspect of inner state of an individual. The hard aspect is vague as a political manifesto; the soft aspect is enriching

Plato seeks to design the ideal political state, an imaginary community, to serve as a paradigm. The soft purpose is to help us understand the individual who corresponds to the (imaginary) state. Plato is big on "forms" or paradigms of the perfect to which we try to approximate ourselves, or assimilate ourselves to God. Thus, philosophy to Plato is a way of life. His purpose was to get his readers to change their lives, to undertake the pursuit of assimilation to God.

Also he is big on unity, how everything ties together.

Key themes:

1. *The principle of specialization* – [recalls Luther's doctrine of vocation; Catholic station in life] Each person has a single talent that contributes toward the welfare of the community; this is not argued but taken for granted. This leads to class structures which involve cooperating w/each other to contribute to the welfare of the whole. This is also used to vehemently reject democracy where anyone can do any job he wishes (555b-556c).
2. *Education: molding the minds* – ch 4. – this preserves the guardian function of the community, thereby preserving unity.
3. *Authoritarianism* – P gives the impression of an authoritarian State, but he recognizes the tendency in humans towards excess (pleonexia), and sees that guardians are necessary.
4. *Politics* – hard to locate him, though often painted as totalitarian or a utilitarian. Better seen as a 'benevolent dictator that contributes to the unity and stability of the community. He rejects pluralism and dissension. This leads to his notorious provisions for shared possession of wives and children (since possessiveness causes dissension), and everyone sticking to their natural class.
5. *Poetry, morality/justice, and education* – he rejects most poetry as playing to our desirous appetites and not good for unity
6. *Class division* – the state is split between those who live and do not live a normal life. Drawing on principles of selection, which leads to the three broad bands and classes of the state. Jobs and talents fit in each band. Thus no absolute unity, but unity within each band or class. His big aim is to have unity among the rulers. Social morality/justice is defined in terms of the three classes: 1) workers are the body and limbs of the state; 2) the auxiliaries/guardians are its heart; and 3) philosophers/rulers its head. Juvenas asks, "who will guard the guardians?" (6. 346-7)
7. *A tripartite psychology* – (p. xxxvi)
8. *Morality/justice* – ch6. The rule of reason; doing the good for its own sake. The first western thinker to provide detailed arguments for an agent-centered theory of morality/justice rather than an act-centered one. What are the criteria then for an agent's just actions? Psychic harmony under the rule of reason. (p. xli) They are moral experts because they know what is good, and because they are best equipped to educate others in morality/justice.
9. *Knowledge and belief: a sketch* – thanks to their knowledge, philosophers are capable of more morality/justice than others. Yet Plato wants to deny full reality to the world of the senses, seeing them not as knowledge (Allen notes that Xn

theology, believing in a created order, makes the shift to endorse empirical observation). He makes a distinction between types [concepts] (which are absolutely and unfailingly what they are) and the things of this world (which are utterly defective in this respect).

10. *The work of types* - the main function of types is to act as paradigms, reference points. *Since the book is an ethical inquiry in which metaphysics and logic play only a supporting role, these types serve as objective standards.*
11. *Two worlds?* - sort of. But he believes we can all gain knowledge, have transformed and reoriented minds to see things as they really are. Recall the three similes of *The Sun*, *The Line*, and *The Cave*. (506a ff)
12. *Types of substances* - Waterfield believes the main function of types is to help us identify things
13. *Goodness, morality/justice, and metaphysics* - platonic metaphysics means that goodness comes from participation in the type of goodness; goodness is the supreme type. Chs 1-6 are his moral inquiry, resumes again in ch 11 where he links morality and metaphysics. Goodness is not only the metaphysical acme but also the moral and political acme. Aristotle charges Plato with empty formalism on this point (NE 1.6), never defining goodness, using just image and metaphor. Waterfield says Plato's concept of goodness may be wrong but it is not empty - he responds saying the using the principle of selection, members of a community perform their function, which allows a community to perform its function of benefiting all its members, such a community is a good community because fulfilling one's function is good. Thus a connection between goodness and function. Morality/justice (defined in ch. 6) involves the rule of reason, and reason knows what is good for various strata of society and the community as a whole, hence morality/justice requires knowledge of goodness. Plato's vision is of a rationally ordered, teleological [???] universe, where everything has its place and purpose. The universe is good because it is rationally ordered.
14. *Moral egoism* - Plato (and Socrates) is a moral egoist. That is, it is good for me to do good for others; my happiness is increased by increasing others' happiness. (cf. The Myth of Er)
15. *Real and ideal* - the two worlds of the real and the ideal overlap.
16. *The good life* - ch 6. Defines morality/justice as psychic harmony.

Notable points for me:

1. Affluence and poverty (421d - 422a) - he sees excessive affluence and poverty as corrupting the workers (and thereby society) and making them bad at their jobs. This damages the unity of society.
2. Plato sees three kinds of people (workers; guardians, passion defends integrity; intellect supervises) in the political life that correspond to three parts of the mind/soul.

Statesmen

Laws -

At most he lays down some principles - articles of belief rather than laws - to bind and guide the ruler. The state must never be allowed to exceed its size and citizens must always be kept to the due discharge of a specific function. Law comes down to earth. Nevertheless, he makes the first Greek attempt to systematize and codify criminal and civil law. (Barker, Politics intro, lv)

Timaeus – tries to link the morality of *The Republic* (both the soul and the polis) as an ideal and show it in actual operation; the world is also rationally organized. He joins together the third concentric circle now, the cosmos is the world/creation.

Phaedo – another dialogue on love

Symposium – setting is a banquet given by Agathon to celebrate his first victory. A series of dialogues/speeches on love, and beauty, concluding that love of wisdom, philosophy is the greatest for of love. The Platonic Form of Beauty is the final object of all love. *Eros* is not beautiful or good; love must be a lover of wisdom, pursuit of wisdom is motivated by love. A wonderful literary work, offering a theory of love, the description of the Form of Beauty.

Plato's *Republic*

Context and background – Socrates, as Plato's teacher and main impetus for Plato's thinking; Plato places his own thoughts in Socrates' mouth in the dialogues. The rise of science and the dismissal of gods, marks a turn in pre-Socratic philosophy. They discovered nature, i.e. thunder was more than Zeus. They were open to reason, and a distancing from ancient Greek mythology. Problem, they became naturalists, i.e. water, air are first principles. Reality and appearance differ; pre-socratics said the reality behind appearances are materials as first cause. Others, like Heraclitus said appearances are reality; i.e. there is no first cause; "you can't step into the same river twice."

change v. permanent

Socrates was a turning point in Greek philosophy. How to account for unity among diverse appearances; if there is a first cause, is it merely air, water i.e. matter. But is there a unifying cause (the one-many problem), a first principle? His 2nd problem was political: Sparta had defeated Athens (a democracy), they'd lost faith in themselves. Plato needed to convince people; engaged the *Sophists* (wisdom, wandering teachers of rhetoric, how to win arguments), especially *Gorgias* and *Protagoras*. Re Gorgias, Socrates is worried about a whole generation of young men learning to speak well, but who are not versed in moral teachings. Re Protagoras who has a doctrine that "man is the measure of all things." Socrates is worried about dealing with things just at the level of appearances, i.e. the good as it seems to one, may not be the good to someone else. Protagoras' doctrine is ultimately self-defeating.

In the *Phaedo* dialogue just before he (Socrates) dies, he reflects on his early readings, i.e. on *Anaxagoras*, who said the mind is the (first) cause of all things. Is nature with a purpose, and directed by a human mind? The 2nd problem he dealt with was the relativism and lack of cultural standards left in Athens. He sees nature as purposeful, which we can participate in... the mind needs to be the same, i.e. purposeful, and he does not see this in Athens. He asks so-called experts to define their virtues (what is courage, friendship, etc) , which no one can do. He's much more than an ancient deconstructionist; he's trying to point out what virtues ("*aretay*" – means human excellence, but usually translated as virtue) are. He concludes it exists in human knowledge. "Virtue is knowledge; knowledge is virtue." Knowledge is only gained by moral self-reflection; knowledge is not simply intellectualistic; it is moral too.

His two problems, moral and political, start to come together: there is a first cause, yet there is a moral component; knowing means becoming a better person. He's seeking a common shape in virtues, and yet what distinguishes it from something else. To know what something really is, it's *eidos*, you can gain virtue. This relates to his asking experts, what is x? What is its *eidos*, its form? *Eidos* – means form or shape, which is also permanent and eternal. A metaphor.

The Republic regarded as the high-point of Plato's middle period. Only two dialogues (*Phaedo* and *Republic*) which take place outside the city. He's going out for a ceremony for a new god brought into Athens. Asked on his return, what is justice? A struggle for their soul, as some of the questioners are young men. Thrasymachus, a 4th c BCE Nietzsche (!) says, justice is being able to do what you want, a will to power; Plato sees this as a threat. How does the old conservatism respond (they have no answer)? Plato dismisses his arguments easily but doesn't convince him. The *Ring of Geiges* (sp?),

raises the question of conscience, "prove to me Socrates why one needs to be just." *The Republic* is an attempt to answer **why it is always better to be just**, and why you can't damage the soul of the just person. M

The **soul is like a city**, with many parts (passions, biological urges; *thumas* – pride in living up to certain standards; the rational). Plato wasn't against passions, etc, they just need to be in their right place, and **guided by knowledge** (e.g. a philosopher king, which is by definition a contradiction!). Plato wasn't necessarily democratic. [not clear what he meant by this]

What is this "highest knowledge" that the rational part is supposed to know (in either the city or the soul)? Answer: **knowledge of "the good."** It serves as a great measure for everything else. Remember, he believes that **everything has a purpose** [teleological]. He claims that all people act for the good (astounding to us, and our concept of evil, e.g. Hitler – but Hitler is acting for what he thinks is the good, and he is guided by that sense of the good to do the things he does... problem with the relativism argument). It is knowledge of the good, which really determines what ii is we do,

For Monday – three images for the nature. The sun, line, and the cave – why Plato became attractive to Christianity

505-518; last part of book 6 and 7

9-21-98 Mon. (from tape recording).

Plato's concept of *the Good*

(offers the simile of the sun to help understand the nature of the transcendent Good, which Xns took to be God, and proceeds through images of Divided Line and the Cave, to discuss how human beings can be related to that ultimate reality)

Three analogies to explain what ^{knowledge} the good is like: the sun, the line and the cave

How the city should be ruled, it needs a particular type of knowledge, the knowledge of the good. It is the common measure of life. How are we to use knowledge; to what use is it to be put. Plato assumes we do things for certain purposes, the good

In Augustine's book *On Christian Teaching* – use/enjoyment distinction; things are to be used v. things that are to be enjoyed for enjoyment's sake (e.g. God, as knowledge and desire rest in God)

The good is not pleasure (arguing against Epicureans). But one then is it? Socrates give three images, but also makes clear that one cannot ever exactly define the good, as Plato sees it, and is also important for Christian theology.

A. Knowledge is like the sun.

- 1) Knowledge is likened to seeing. To see, we need three things: an object to be seen; an object to do the seeing; and we also need light.
- 2) What we know is known through an idea, letting us see and know other things, it sheds light on other things. Plato says we can tell if someone knows the good, if they know how to use pleasures and treat other people, or for a ruler to rule wisely [utilitarian?]. (Simone Weil puts it, that we can learn by observation things that have occurred which we haven't seen).
- 3) The sun not only makes thing known (i.e. first principle of knowledge), it makes things grow (a principle of beauty) and be generative of all that exists. Seeing things as they are (theory matches reality) is truth. Source of being known and being are the same. Socrates says truth, beauty, and being all descend from the good; all its offspring.
- 4) The good is not being; it is beyond being. The idea of the good is transcendent.

Early Christian thinkers (e.g. Cappodocian fathers) saw in Plato the idea of the good, which they likened to God. In Plato, they saw a fellow-traveler. Cf. Psalm 36 (in your light...)

B. Analogy of knowledge of the good as like a divided line.

Knowledge and being put on a vertical line. Intellectual (form, mathematical) and visible things (material things, images/reflections). To know the forms requires intellection (*gnosis*); belief (*epistis*); imagination (*akasia*). Plato is known for his doctrine of the Form – for everything there is a perfect form. To know the form of 'table' is to recognize one everywhere. The real chair is a form of a chair, everything else is an image of a chair (but images are also real, just not as real as form). A hierarchy of Form. Images depend on material. Reflections (in an ancient mirror or in a pond) are not as clear as the form itself. With knowledge (of Form) one can see material things for what they are, or are not. Plato calls the sensible world an image or reflection of the Forms (thus it is

not really a creation but a copy of the world of forms.) The entire sensible universe is directed toward the good.

Forms – trying to make a statue, means having an idea of a form in mind. Yet the final statue is but an image and never quite the perfect form.

How to tell the good from evil, or the wrong? One who knows the good would not be making snap judgments. There is some hierarchy of knowledge which allows us to distinguish between images. Not like Manichaeans, where the ultimate good is out there, independent of the material world. To Plato whatever good this world has is dependent on and participates in the higher good. There is a sense that even being depends upon the generative good, and therefore has a certain amount of good. [created in the image of God]. Therefore Plato wants us to strive for a higher degree of goodness. Deism view of creation (17th c. idea) – the watchmaker God, who started the world up, sets it in motion, and lets it go.

C. Knowledge is like a cave –

This image puts all three images together. [a great metaphor to use today when describing our Christian conversion, awareness of God, and subsequent walk in the light]. You move from images, visible things, to be able to see them more clearly in the light of the sun, and finally we can even look at the sun itself. But, having seen the sun, one must go back into the life of the cave to live and work there. Note, that the person who has been unchained, seen the sun and light will not be liked by others.

Next week: *Timaeus*

Plato's *Timaeus* (or *oishonomen*)

("While Plato's view is not the Xn doctrine *ex nihilo*, this became an important way of discussing how a good and perfect being could create and impart goodness within a world that was not an extension of God.")

End of the *Republic* is dedicated to answer Glaucon's question. Why should one try to be just and good; what good is justice in and of itself. What is the nature of the good: creative, generative? Reality is the clue. At the end of Bk. X he uses myths to discuss the afterlife, and that those who are made good are in tune with reality. Goodness is in itself absolutely good; The good is the way things go. Socrates was the ideal philosopher king even though he was rejected.

In *Timaeus*, Plato tries to link the morality of the *Republic* (both the soul and the political) as an ideal and show it in actual operation; the world is also rationally organized. Socrates was not himself interested in big cosmological explanations. Plato took one speculative stab at this in *Timaeus*. It looks like it was written as a dialogue right after the *Republic*, but no, many years intervened. He sees concentric circles of the human polis; the world as a whole. He sees a correlation and linking between the spheres. (*Cosmos* means an ordered whole; the world in a unified sense). In the *Republic* he just talks about the first two spheres; in *Timaeus* he addresses the third sphere, getting at it through a creation story.

Three players in *Timaeus*: 1) demiurge (one who works, creates, *demiergas*); 2) ideas; 3) necessity (*anankay*). Anything that is generated, must have something which generated it. Assumes it must be generated by something unseen. Because the world is visible, it must be created by something unseen i.e. a God. In essence he gives a proof for a God. If the world was created good, it was created on an eternal path patterned on something good and unchangeable. He thinks the creator is good, and has an overflow of goodness, which he wants to spread around. [*Christians* picked up on this. God created as a superabundance of his own goodness, not because he needed to. An act of grace.] This there is a sense that the good is something fecund; it grows. [think of Aristotle's rejection of money generating interest, as not fecund.]

Timaeus says, "The father and maker of all this universe is past finding out, and even if we found him, to tell of him to all men would be impossible." (28c)

The creator (1) looks to a separate realm of ideas (2) and perfection (cf. *Republic's* divided line), and with that pattern in mind, forms things into an *anankay* (3), an ordered form. An artistic notion of creation. Imposing it one something which has no qualities whatsoever. (*Aristotle* later calls this prime matter, which has no form, once you apply thought to it you give it form.) Plato does not use the term matter, but *anankay*. To try to describe it at all sets it up with qualities and presuppositions. He calls it a receptacle, which receives the forms which are pressed upon it giving it form. (By taking a triangle as a basic element, you can build up any rectilinear object... trinity...).

There is something which resists the forming, even good things don't always go smoothly; there is a form of chaos or matter itself, which resists form. Here is where Plato introduces the problem of evil (when people do not recognize the good, yet he also

acknowledges that if you gather a group of good people, things can still go wrong – he says in *Republic* that even a perfect State will ultimately degenerate.)

To harmonize various linked ideas (not juxtaposed ideas) and qualities he creates a world soul; that is what gives the world life, and proportion, and mathematical harmony. An ordered whole. Not only are all things linked in some sort of harmony, but the soul is the link to the Creator. The creator is thus transcendent, but not simply remote. The Creator permeates the world through the soul. Notion of harmony is important to Plato. Proportions are important, as in mathematical relationships and in musical harmony (where things can be expressed as a ratio). Soul for Plato is the source of motion.

What did Christianity see in Plato?

Augustine in Bk. 8 of *City of God*, he reviews philosophy of the ancient world. He treats Platonists favorably, that they came closest to the truth. Socrates saw that the causes of things could be reduced to the one good God... a mind should seek a purified state... to lift up... to know these good things by a purified mind. To know the good, you have to be purified. Moral knowledge was crucial to him. Augustine sees the activity (ethical life among people) and contemplation (of the source of life and all things). They are intertwined. (There is only one God in Plato; logically it has to be that way; this God is not physical, which is important to God – only when he saw God as transcendent and non-physical was Augustine satisfied.) The Platonists helped him see that, and better understand ultimate cause.

God is not part of the world. Knowing God is loving God. God cannot be just abstract and distant. Must be a desire to imitate [Pauline]; and conform to God. This is terrifically similar to Xnty, but also significant differences between early Xn thought and Plato (where Xns adapted, expanded or rejected):

- 1) Plato sort of places God outside the world, but not a full blown creation *ex nihilo*. In Plato, something resists God's will (*anankay* or chaos). Yet Xnty understood that whatever existed, happened by God's will. God gave us free will, which means our resistance is not against God's will, as he gave us the choice to resist.
- 2) Creation – can be seen in two senses: a) as a beginning; b) as an eternal order (the ancient philosophers all assumed the world had always been). To Plato, the creator is the principle by which an eternal order exists; there is no starting or ending point. Christians, of course, join these ideas two together, that there was a beginning and there is also an ordering.
- 3) Transcendence – Plato's God is transcendent, which was unusual for the ancient world. Yet not entirely the full break that Xns make. To Xns the split is absolute: God is wholly other, even though by acts of grace God can be present (immanence/transcendence question).
- 4) To Plato – the creator and ideas are separate (creator turns to ideas or Forms to create). Xns merge the creator and the perfections (ideas) into one being and mind of God.

Next week:
Symposium

Monday 9-27-98 (tape recorded)

10/9 read Allen ch 3 and spirituality essay by Springsted)

Plato's concept of love, v. the Xn concept. Context first. To Plato and Socrates, to live any good life, means to know the good, and know the Form of the Good, which is generative and creates reality itself. So when someone makes a moral mistake, one must ask why. Plato makes the astounding claim that we all desire the good, but if so, how come we always screw up, and make choices for the bad? Answer: most people don't know what the good is, thus evil becomes a form of ignorance. Today: people smoke, knowing it is not good for them, but they do it – so ignorance is not involved. That is the problem with Plato's logic here on the notion of goodness strictly in terms of knowledge. We have competing desires (Augustine recognizes that the will overcomes us and we do things we know are not good for us; Paul says the same).

Plato came to recognize this, too, that competing passions, desires existed that overpower mere knowledge. Law of Contradiction indicates that there are two types of desire operative in the soul (in different parts of the soul). Three parts to the soul: 1) honorable desires and appetites; passions; 2) dishonorable desires and appetites; 3) reason. The key is to order these three (not get rid of any of them, but direct them to their proper object; Aristotle agrees); versus the Stoics who sought to get rid of them, i.e. *apothea*, apathy. These needed to be ordered; reason ruled.

Phaedrus, Plato's other dialogue on love. The soul is like a chariot driven by a white horse (honorable passions) and a black horse (dishonorable passions). The white horse falls in line, the black horse is unruly. The charioteer needs to train the black horse how to approach the object of its love. Reason needs to see where the chariot is going.

Living the good life is more than just living well in the polis. Rather, we are meant for something more. Philosophy for Plato and Socrates is a way of life. It is to live a life which seeks true good and which knows that this is beyond this world although this world reflects it.

Yet knowledge of the good has an erotic element to it (in two senses:) Reason is not simply mathematical and calculating. The mind has an erotic quality, too. Sexuality and spirituality are closely connected.

Symposium is like an after dinner party. Their entertainment is giving speeches dedicated to the topic love. Socrates goes last after five speeches, which give the range of the ancient Greek views of love (*eros*): 1) Phaedrus – love is the greatest of all the gods, in terms of what it can do (i.e. it is generative, it bring friendship which drives us to honorable actions, and shun what is shameful; love is the author of many fine acts); 2) says that view is naive, not everyone is honorable all the time, thus only heavenly love brings is the highest love (good love v. base love); 3) a physician – love is a cosmic principle that harmonizes the various aspects of the world; 4) most interesting – a comic writer – he tells a myth about humans split in half, as three gendered, and ever since we are trying to find the lost human/half; love is a matter of a personal relation between two people; a drive toward unity and completion; 5) Agathon – we must praise love for its beauty and moral excellence; the problem is that he is love with love.

Plato's Symposium (notes from the book's intro)

Plato, quoting Socrates. Symposium (literally means, "drinking together") is known for: the theory of love, eros; the description of the Form of Beauty; and for its literary elements.

Philosophy, the pursuit of wisdom, is motivated by love. Love is a desire for wisdom. It is, in fact, love's highest expectation. Eros, the desire to "give birth in beauty." Beauty itself, which makes everything else beautiful, and the ultimate object of all eros. This "Form" of Beauty is pure, unchanging, beautiful in every way; separate from all things which derive their beauty from it (wholly other). It exists independently of all beautiful things (Transcendent). Nothing that happens to them can ever affect it (immutable!)

The dialogue of the theory of Forms is best given in *The Phaedo*.

Wednesday 9/30/98 Springsted lecture
Symposium

Socrates follows several speeches about love, following Agathon (who raised the idea that love is a god, wonderful and most beautiful). S tries to de-divinize love as a god (Agathon is in love with love). S makes grammatical points: love always has an object, it is transitive – love of something. 2nd it's always love of s.th. we don't have, i.e. it is some kind of desire (referring to eros). Love, in desiring the good and beautiful, cannot be good and beautiful itself. Love is a relationship.

The priestess (who has informed S) says even if it not beautiful in itself, it is not ugly either. It is a *daimon*, a spirit between heaven and earth, a mediator. Sets up the notion that love of the good is much more than sexual (as most of the earlier speakers have suggested). Plato makes the move, that love is not sacred in itself, though it may connect us to something sacred. Thus, Plato and Socrates make the key move that eros is not a god, nor is to be worshipped. The OT makes this same point (Baal, and Astar fertility cults, temple prostitution). Sexuality is part of creation, not part of the creator.

It is probably accurate to say in Plato that there is one source of good and that is God. While there were other earlier philosophers who saw that there was one source of all things (and that it was good), Plato is the most articulate. And this is where one's love ought to be directed, this ultimate good, as that is pleasing and beautiful.

How good is Plato's characterization of what we would call "love of God?" Andres Nygren's (Swedish Lutheran bishop early in 20th c.) Agape and Eros argued that Eros was anti-God. Chief example of God's love is his unnecessary gift of grace to us, given not because of our worth. He says Xn agape never responds to need, it is always self-giving. God gives love, agape, not because we deserve it. Eros is always self-seeking (desiring something we don't have) whereas agape is always self-giving. Nygren, we can never show agape toward God, as everything we can give is really only gratitude (so how do we do the *shema*?). Springsted says that Nygren doesn't talk about Platonic love properly. Which is why Augustine and other early Xn thinkers liked about Plato, there was a way to begin talking about God and love of God.

Why do we love the good??? Not because we are good, but because of desire for what we don't have. Once we possess it, we no longer desire it. (think of desiring a steak

sandwich, after eating it we don't desire it). So if we desire and achieve goodness, do we then no longer desire the good? Plato helps us out of this desire trap. Socrates refers to the priestess (recognizing that this is a religious issue, not by reason alone). She says you can never possess the good (how can we, as finite beings, possess the transcendent, the finite), desire is not really for possession but for the conception (steak dinner is not a good example) and sharing and spreading of the good. We can tell how much we love something by how much we want to spread it around. Chasing after the love of the good (and possessing it) is not really right desire.

We aim to conceive the good and propagate it. She says there is an earthly (propagation through children, immortality) and spiritual desire (heroic acts, art) The only true immortality comes from a vision of the good, a vision of god. She sees a scale or ascent to this vision, from beautiful body to beautiful souls to beauty of knowledge (cf 210) – ultimately the good is not a created good, but it is the very form which makes everything else good. This transforms the lover. We are not gods for having seen God, but in being connected to it we become mediators, transformed, and how the good occurs.

This Platonic understanding of eros addresses Nygren's concern, as it transforms selfishness, as one learns to love everybody, neighbor. In loving the good, we actual give more. Xn thinkers who talk about love of God and knowledge of God start to borrow Plato. Yet differences too between Platonic love and Xn love. Xn love is God itself. God who became human is the mediator (not some daimon). The love which we have may be the very active gift of grace, the gift of God. Role of mediator plays a key role.

Platonism sees love of the Good as transcendent, something which aspire towards. Xnty sees God's love as transcendent and incarnate, and as transforming us.

Plato suggests (like Paul and others) the problem is that we love the wrong things. E.g. we love the law for the wrong reasons. We need to love God, to be directed toward something higher which can transform us in how we relate to others. Platonism has to deal with the question, how many people really can get fulfilled... Xnty offers the promise of God's grace for all of God's children.

Plato

Abstract

Socrates, the "gad-fly" of ancient Athens, thought he had a God-given mission to raise all sorts of biting questions about life in that fragile, proto-democratic city-state. He also gave theoretical answers to various questions posed to him by others. A number of young leaders gathered around Socrates and adopted his critical way of thinking, to the chagrin of the elders. When he was tried and executed for being "impious" of the town gods, his student, Plato, founded a school to teach his approach to life. Plato wrote a number of "dialogues" to reflect his engaged method of inquiry and debate. One key question concerned human nature; is it basically good or evil? To what degree can we trust ourselves and our neighbors?

It is sometimes suggested that only the biblical traditions teach the idea of "original sin" — the notion that the primal goodness in humanity has been so distorted that we humans always tend toward untruth and injustice. Thus we find people around us, and ourselves when we are honest about it, seeking selfish ends and taking unfair advantage of our neighbors and of the social and natural environment.

The idea of original sin, however, is not only biblical. A similar view was present in the ancient authoritative poets, such as Homer and Hesiod. It was also present in philosophy, at least since a friend of Socrates named Glaucon asked his opinion on the "parable of the rings," a dialogue that is contained in one of Plato's most famous books, *The Republic*. If the point of the parable is correct, the implications are momentous for business. Is human nature such that people would stop doing honest work and would seduce the innocent and exploit their neighbor for personal gain if they were not controlled by the fear of getting caught? If so, what principles ought to be put in place by political

authority to constrain people's tendencies to evil? As Socrates constructs a model of the economic base of the city, he imagines how it can become "fevered," driven by gluttony. And this, he suggests, leads to war. Economics may be the base of civilization, but it is also the source of violence and imperialism. Economics must be controlled by government, but what is to guide politics?

Plato's response, the remainder of the book, spells out what is suggested in this excerpt: the cure for injustice requires a sense of how the whole is constituted. It is notable that the analysis of what constitutes the whole begins by describing the various kinds of persons and activities that are necessary for society to exist. These, Socrates says, have to be politically controlled to make sure they serve the common good. This in turn requires wise philosophers who are able both to guide the rulers and to teach what is true and just to the citizens. To find that wisdom, he seeks principles that humans already know in the depths of their souls but that become obscured by the clutter of life.

Plato's arguments contain such insights that later thinkers made up the legend that Plato learned from biblical writings. Although that is unlikely, many themes from Plato were adopted as the natural ally of Jewish and Christian convictions. In any case, his view of the relationship of intellectual and moral leadership to the well-being of the common life has been much debated over the centuries, as has the capacity of natural reflection to discover what is universally true, just, and fitting to the cosmopolitan life.

On the Myth of the Ring and the Economics of the City

Plato

Glaucou said to me: Socrates, do you wish really to persuade us, or only to seem to have persuaded us, that to be just is always better than to be unjust?

I should wish really to persuade you, I replied, if I could.

Then you certainly have not succeeded. Let me ask you now: — How would you arrange goods — are there not some which we welcome for their own sakes, and independently of their consequences, as, for example, harmless pleasures and enjoyments, which delight us at the time, although nothing follows from them?

I agree in thinking that there is such a class, I replied.

Is there not also a second class of goods, such as knowledge, sight, health, which are desirable not only in themselves, but also for their results?

Certainly, I said.

And would you not recognize a third class, such as gymnastic, and the care of the sick, and the physician's art; also the various ways of money-making — these do us good but we regard them as disagreeable; and no one would choose them for their own sakes, but only for the sake of some reward or result which flows from them?

There is, I said, this third class also. But why do you ask?

Because I want to know in which of the three classes you would place justice?

In the highest class, I replied, — among those

goods which he who would be happy desires both for their own sake and for the sake of their results.

Then the many are of another mind; they think that justice is to be reckoned in the troublesome class, among goods which are to be pursued for the sake of rewards and of reputation, but in themselves are disagreeable and rather to be avoided.

I know, I said, that this is their manner of thinking. . . .

I wish, he said, that you would hear me . . . and then I shall see whether you and I agree. . . . To my mind the nature of justice and injustice have not yet been made clear. Setting aside their rewards and results, I want to know what they are in themselves, and how they inwardly work in the soul. . . . I will speak (first) of the nature and origin of justice according to the common view of them. Secondly, I will show that all men who practice justice do so against their will, of necessity, but not as a good. And (thirdly) I will argue that there is reason in this view, for the life of the unjust is after all better far than the life of the just. . . .

Now that those who practice justice do so involuntarily and because they have not the power to be unjust will best appear if we imagine something of this kind: having given both to the just and the unjust power to do what they will, let us watch and see whither desire will lead them; then we shall discover in the very act the just and unjust man to be proceeding along the same road, following their interest, which all natures deem to be their good, and are only diverted into the path of justice by the force of law. The liberty which we are supposing may be most completely given to them in the form of such a power as is said to have been possessed by Gyges. . . . According to the tradition, Gyges was a shepherd in the service of the king of Lydia; there was a great storm, and an earthquake made an opening in the earth at the place where he was feeding his flock. Amazed at the sight, he descended into the opening, where, among other marvels, he beheld a hollow brazen horse, having doors, at which he stooping and looking in saw a dead body of stature . . . more than human, and having nothing on but a gold ring; this he took from the finger of the dead and reascended. Now the shepherds met together, according to custom, that they might send their

From Plato, *The Republic* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1942), chap. 2.

monthly report about the flocks to the king; into their assembly he came having the ring on his finger, and as he was sitting among them he chanced to turn the collet of the ring inside his hand, when instantly he became invisible to the rest of the company and they began to speak of him as if he were no longer present. He was astonished at this, and again touching the ring he turned the collet outwards and reappeared; he made several trials of the ring, and always with the same result — when he turned the collet inwards he became invisible, when outwards he reappeared. Whereupon he contrived to be chosen one of the messengers who were sent to the court; where as soon as he arrived he seduced the queen, and with her help conspired against the king and slew him, and took the kingdom. Suppose now that there were two such magic rings, and the just put on one of them and the unjust the other; no man can be imagined to be of such an iron nature that he would stand fast in justice. No man would keep his hands off what was not his own when he could safely take what he liked out of the market, or go into houses and lie with any one at his pleasure, or kill or release from prison whom he would, and in all respects be like a god among men. Then the actions of the just would be as actions of the unjust; they would both come at last to the same point. And this we may truly affirm to be a great proof that a man is just, not willingly or because he thinks that justice is any good to him individually, but of necessity, for wherever ✓ any one thinks that he can safely be unjust, there he is unjust. For all men believe in their hearts that injustice is far more profitable to the individual than justice, and he who argues as I have been supposing, will say that they are right. If you could imagine any one obtaining this power of becoming invisible, and never doing any wrong or touching what was another's he would be thought by the lookers-on to be a most wretched idiot, although they would praise him to one another's faces, and keep up appearances with one another from a fear that they too might suffer injustice. . . .

Heavens! my dear Glaucon, I said, how energetically you polish them up for the decision, first one and then the other, as if they were two statues.

I do my best, he said. And now that we know what they are like there is no difficulty in tracing

out the sort of life which awaits either of them. This I will proceed to describe; but. . . let me put them into the mouths of the eulogists of injustice: They will tell you that the just man who is thought unjust will be scourged, racked, bound — will have his eyes burnt out; and, at last, after suffering every kind of evil, he will be impaled: Then he will understand that he ought to seem only, and not to be, just; the words of Aeschylus may be more truly spoken of the unjust than of the just. For the unjust is pursuing a reality; he does not live with a view to appearances — he wants to be really unjust and not to seem only: —

His mind has a soil deep and fertile,
Out of which spring his prudent counsels.

In the first place, he is thought just, and therefore bears rule in the city; he can marry whom he will, . . . also he can trade and deal where he likes, and always to his own advantage, because he has no misgivings about injustice; and at every contest, whether in public or private, he gets the better of his antagonists, and gains at their expense, and is rich, and out of his gains he can benefit his friends, and harm his enemies; moreover, he can offer sacrifices, and dedicate gifts to the gods abundantly and magnificently, and can honor the gods or any man whom he wants to honor in a far better style than the just, and therefore he is likely to be dearer than they are to the gods. And thus, Socrates, gods and men are said to unite in making the life of the unjust better than the life of the just. . . .

He proceeded: And now when the young hear all this said about virtue and vice, and the way in which gods and men regard them, how are their minds likely to be affected, my dear Socrates, — those of them, I mean, who are quick-witted, and, like bees on the wing, light on every flower, and from all that they hear are prone to draw conclusions as to what manner of persons they should be and in what way they should walk if they would make the best of life? . . .

Glaucon and the rest entreated me . . . to proceed in the investigation. They wanted to arrive at the truth, first, about the nature of justice and injustice, and secondly, about their relative advantages. I told them, what I really thought, that the inquiry would be of a serious nature, and would

require very good eyes. Seeing then, I said, that we are no great wits, I think that we had better adopt a method which I may illustrate thus; suppose that a short-sighted person had been asked by some one to read small letters from a distance; and it occurred to some one else that they might be found in another place which was larger and in which the letters were larger — if they were the same and he could read the larger letters first, and then proceed to the lesser — this would have been thought a rare piece of good fortune.

Very true, said Adeimantus; but how does the illustration apply to our inquiry?

I will tell you, I replied: justice, which is the subject of our inquiry, is, as you know, sometimes spoken of as the virtue of an individual, and sometimes as the virtue of a State.

True, he replied.

And is not a State larger than an individual?

It is.

Then in the larger the quantity of justice is likely to be larger and more easily discernible. I propose therefore that we inquire into the nature of justice and injustice, first as they appear in the State, and secondly in the individual, proceeding from the greater to the lesser and comparing them.

That, he said, is an excellent proposal.

And if we imagine the State in process of creation, we shall see the justice and injustice of the State in process of creation also. . . .

A State, I said, arises, as I conceive, out of the needs of mankind; no one is self-sufficing, but all of us have many wants. Can any other origin of a State be imagined?

There can be no other.

Then, as we have many wants, and many persons are needed to supply them, one takes a helper for one purpose and another for another; and when these partners and helpers are gathered together in one habitation the body of inhabitants is termed a State.

True, he said.

And they exchange with one another, and one gives, and another receives, under the idea that the exchange will be for their good.

Very true.

Then, I said, let us begin and create in idea a State; and yet the true creator is necessity, who is the mother of our invention.

Of course, he replied.

Now the first and greatest of necessities is food, which is the condition of life and existence.

Certainly.

The second is a dwelling, and the third clothing and the like.

True.

And now let us see how our city will be able to supply this great demand: We may suppose that one man is a husbandman, another a builder, some one else a weaver — shall we add to them a shoemaker, or perhaps some other purveyor to our bodily wants?

Quite right.

The barest notion of a State must include four or five men.

Clearly.

And how will they proceed? Will each bring the result of his labors into a common stock? — the individual husbandman, for example, producing for four, and laboring four times as long and as much as he need in the provision of food with which he supplies others as well as himself; or will he have nothing to do with others and not be at the trouble of producing for them, but provide for himself alone a fourth of the food in a fourth of the time, and in the remaining three-fourths of his time be employed in making a house or a coat or a pair of shoes, having no partnership with others, but supply himself all his own wants?

Adeimantus thought that he should aim at producing food only and not at producing everything.

Probably, I replied, that would be the better way; and when I hear you say this, I am myself reminded that we are not all alike; there are diversities of natures among us which are adapted to different occupations.

Very true.

And will you have a work better done when the workman has many occupations, or when he has only one?

When he has only one.

Further, there can be no doubt that a work is spoiled when not done at the right time?

No doubt.

For business is not disposed to wait until the doer of the business is at leisure; but the doer must follow up what he is doing, and make the business his first object.

He must.

And if so, we must infer that all things are produced more plentiful and easily and of a better quality when one man does one thing which is natural to him and does it at the right time, and leaves other things.

Undoubtedly.

Then more than four citizens will be required; for the husbandman will not make his own plough or mattock, or other implements of agriculture, if they are to be good for anything. Neither will the builder make his tools — and he too needs many; and in like manner the weaver and shoemaker.

True.

Then carpenters and smiths, and many other artisans, will be sharers in our little State, which is already beginning to grow?

True.

Yet even if we add neatherds, shepherds, and other herdsmen, in order that our husbandmen may have oxen to plough with, and builders as well as husbandmen may have draught cattle, and curriers and weavers fleeces and hides, — still our State will not be very large.

That is true; yet neither will it be a very small State which contains all these.

Then, again, there is the situation of the city — to find a place where nothing need be imported is wellnigh impossible.

Then there must be another class of citizens who will bring the required supply from another city?

There must.

But if the trader goes empty-handed, having nothing which they require who would supply his need, he will come back empty-handed.

That is certain.

And therefore what they produce at home must be not only enough for themselves, but such both in quantity and quality as to accommodate those from whom their wants are supplied.

Very true.

Then more husbandmen and more artisans will be required?

They will.

Not to mention the importers and exporters, who are called merchants?

Yes.

Then we shall want merchants?

We shall.

And if merchandise is to be carried over the

sea, skilful sailors will also be needed, and in considerable numbers?

Yes, in considerable numbers.

Then, again, within the city, how will they exchange their productions? To secure such an exchange was, as you will remember, one of our principal objects when we formed them into a society and constituted a State.

Clearly they will buy and sell.

Then they will need a market-place, and a money-token for purposes of exchange.

Certainly.

Suppose now that a husbandman, or an artisan, brings some production to market, and he comes at a time when there is no one to exchange with him, — is he to leave his calling and sit idle in the market-place?

Not at all; he will find people there who, seeing the want, undertake the office of salesmen. In well-ordered States they are commonly those who are the weakest in bodily strength, and therefore of little use for any other purposes; their duty is to be in the market, and to give money in exchange for goods to those who desire to sell and to take money from those who desire to buy.

This want, then, creates a class of retail-traders in our State. Is not 'retailer' the term which is applied to those who sit in the market-place engaged in buying and selling, while those who wander from one city to another are called merchants?

Yes, he said.

And there is another class of servants, who are intellectually hardly on the level of companionship; still they have plenty of bodily strength for labor, which accordingly they sell, and are called, if I do not mistake, hirelings, hire being the name which is given to the price of their labor.

True.

Then hirelings will help to make up our population?

Yes.

And now, Adeimantus, is our State matured and perfected?

I think so.

Where, then, is justice and where is injustice, and in what part of the State did they spring up?

Probably in the dealings of these citizens with one another. I cannot imagine that they are more likely to be found anywhere else.

I dare say that you are right in your suggestion, I said, we had better think the matter out, and not shrink from the inquiry. . . .

Let us then consider, first of all, what will be their way of life, now that we have thus established them. Will they not produce corn, and wine, and clothes, and shoes, and build houses for themselves? And when they are housed, they will work, in summer, commonly, stripped and barefoot, but in winter substantially clothed and shod. They will feed on barley-meal and flour of wheat, baking and kneading them, making noble cakes and loaves; these they will serve up on a mat of reeds or on clean leaves, themselves reclining the while upon beds strewn with yew or myrtle. And they and their children will feast, drinking of the wine which they have made, wearing garlands on their heads, and hymning the praises of the gods, in happy converse with one another. And they will take care that their families do not exceed their means; having an eye to poverty or war.

But, said Glaucon, interposing, you have not given them a relish to their meal.

True, I replied, I had forgotten; of course they must have a relish — salt, and olives, and cheese, and they will boil roots and herbs such as country people prepare; for a dessert we shall give them figs, and peas, and beans; and they will roast myrtle-berries and acorns at the fire, drinking in moderation. And with such a diet they may be expected to live in peace and health to a good old age, and bequeath a similar life to their children after them.

Yes, Socrates, he said, and if you were providing for a city of pigs, how else would you feed the beasts?

But what would you have, Glaucon? I replied.

Why, he said, you should give them the ordinary conveniences of life. People who are to be comfortable are accustomed to life on sofas, and dine off tables, and they should have sauces and sweets in the modern style.

Yes, I said, now I understand: the question which you would have me consider is, not only how a State, but how a luxurious State is created; and possibly there is no harm in this, for in such a State we shall be more likely to see how justice and injustice originate. In my opinion the true and healthy constitution of the State is the one which I have described. But if you wish also to see a State at fever-heat, I have no objection. For I suspect

that many will not be satisfied with the simpler way of life. They will be for adding sofas, and tables, and other furniture; also dainties, and perfumes, and incense, and courtesans, and cakes, all these not of one sort only, but in every variety; we must go beyond the necessities of which I was at first speaking, such as houses, and clothes, and shoes: the arts of the painter and the embroiderer will have to be set in motion, and gold and ivory and all sorts of materials must be procured.

True, he said.

Then we must enlarge our borders; for the original healthy State is no longer sufficient. Now will the city have to fill and swell with a multitude of callings which are not required by any natural want; such as the whole tribe of hunters and actors, of whom one large class have to do with forms and colours; another will be the votaries of music — poets and their attendant train of rhapsodists, players, dancers, contractors; also makers of divers kinds of articles, including women's dresses. And we shall want more servants. Will not tutors be also in request, and nurses wet and dry, tirewomen and barbers, as well as confectioners and cooks; and swineherds, too, who were not needed and therefore had no place in the former edition of our State, but are needed now? They must not be forgotten: and there will be animals of many other kinds, if people eat them.

Certainly.

And living in this way we shall have much greater need of physicians than before?

Much greater.

And the country which was enough to support the original inhabitants will be too small now, and not enough?

Quite true.

Then a slice of our neighbours' land will be wanted by us for pasture and tillage, and they will want a slice of ours, if, like ourselves, they exceed the limit of necessity; and give themselves up to the unlimited accumulation of wealth?

That, Socrates, will be inevitable.

And so we shall go to war, Glaucon, shall we not?

Most certainly, he replied.

Then, without determining as yet whether war does good or harm, thus much we may affirm, that now we have discovered war to be derived from causes which are also the causes of almost all the

evils in States, private as well as public. (In any case, all this would have to be managed by a ruler or guardian. . . .)

He who is to be a really good and noble guardian of the State will require to unite in himself philosophy and spirit and swiftness and strength?

Undoubtedly.

Then we have found the desired natures; and now that we have found them, how are they to be reared and educated? Is not this an inquiry which may be expected to throw light on the greater inquiry which is our final end — How do justice and injustice grow up in States? for we do not want either to omit what is to the point or to draw out the argument to an inconvenient length.

Adeimantus thought that the inquiry would be of great service to us.

Then, I said, my dear friend, the task must not be given up, even if somewhat long.

Certainly not.

Come then, and let us pass a leisure hour in story-telling, and our story shall be the education of our heroes.

By all means.

And what shall be their education? Can we find a better than the traditional sort? — and this has two divisions, gymnastic [physical skills] for the body, and music [skills in musing or reflecting] for the soul.

True.

Shall we begin education with music, and go on to gymnastic afterwards?

By all means.

And when you speak of music, do you include literature or not?

I do.

And literature may be either true or false?

Yes.

And the young should be trained in both kinds, and we begin with the false?

I do not understand your meaning, he said.

You know, I said, that we begin by telling children stories which, though not wholly destitute of truth, are in the main fictitious; and these stories are told them when they are not of an age to learn gymnastics.

Very true.

That was my meaning when I said that we must teach music before gymnastics.

Quite right, he said.

You know also that the beginning is the most important part of any work, especially in the case of a young and tender thing; for that is the time at which the character is being formed and the desired impression is more readily taken.

Quite true.

And shall we just carelessly allow children to hear any casual tales which may be devised by casual persons, and to receive into their minds ideas for the most part the very opposite of those which we should wish them to have when they are grown up?

We cannot.

Then the first thing will be to establish a censorship of the writers of fiction, and let the censors receive any tale of fiction which is good, and reject the bad; and we will desire mothers and nurses to tell their children the authorized ones only. Let them fashion the mind with such tales, even more fondly than they mould the body with their hands; but most of those which are now in use must be discarded.

Of what tales are you speaking? he said.

You may find a model of the lesser in the greater, I said; for they are necessarily of the same type, and there is the same spirit in both of them.

Very likely, — he replied; but I do not as yet know what you would term the greater.

Those, I said, which are narrated by Homer and Hesiod, and the rest of the poets, who have ever been the great story-tellers of mankind.

But which stories do you mean, he said; and what fault do you find with them?

A fault which is most serious, I said; the fault of telling a lie, and, what is more, a bad lie.

But when is this fault committed?

Whenever an erroneous representation is made of the nature of gods and heroes, — as when a painter paints a portrait not having the shadow of a likeness to the original.

For a young person cannot judge what is allegorical and what is literal; anything that he receives into his mind at that age is likely to become indelible and unalterable; and therefore it is most important that the tales which the young first hear should be models of virtuous thoughts.

There you are right, he replied; but if any one asks where are such models to be found and of what tales are you speaking — how shall we answer him?

I said to him, you and I, Adeimantus, at this

Excerpts from Hesiod's *Works and Days*

From working, men grow rich in flocks
and gold
And dearer to the deathless gods. In work
There is no shame; shame is in idleness.
And if you work, the lazy man will soon
Envy your wealth: a rich man can become
Famous and good. . . . The humble are
The poor men, while the rich are self-assured.
Money should not be seized; that gold
which is

God's gift is better. If a man gets wealth
By force of hands or through his lying tongue,
As often happens, when greed clouds his mind
And shame is pushed aside by shamelessness,
Then the gods blot him out and blast
his house

And soon his wealth deserts him. Also he
Who harms a guest or suppliant, or acts
Unseemly, sleeping with his brother's wife,
Or in his folly, hurts an orphan child,
Or he who picks rough quarrels and attacks
His father at the threshold of old age,
He angers Zeus himself, and in the end
He pays harsh penalties for all his sins. . . .
Shun evil profit, for dishonest gain
Is just the same as failure. Love your friends;
Approach the men who come to you, and give
To him who gives, but not, if he does not. . . .

Add to your stores, and Famine, burning-eyed,
Will stay away. Even if your supply
Is small, and if you add a little bit,
And do it often, soon it will be big.
Less worry comes from having wealth
at home;

Business abroad is always insecure. . . .
Let wages promised to a friend be fixed
Beforehand; even with your brother, smile
And have a witness, for too much mistrust
And too much trust can both be ruinous. . . .
When the Pleiads, Atlas' daughters, start to rise
Begin your harvest; plough when they
go down.

For forty days and nights they
hide themselves,
And as the year rolls round, appear again
When you begin to sharpen sickle-blades;
This law holds on the plains and by the sea,
And in the mountain valleys. . . . To sow
your seed

Go naked; strip to plough and strip to reap,
If you would harvest all Demeter's yield . . .
And later, you will not be found in need
And forced to beg from other men, and get
No help. See now, you come to me like that,
And I will neither give nor lend to you.
You foolish Perses, go to work! The gods
have given work to men. . . .

— Hesiod, "Works and Days," in *Hesiod and
Theognis*, trans. Dorothea Wender
(Baltimore: Penguin, 1973), pp. 68-71

moment are not poets, but founders of a State:
now the founders of a State ought to know the
general forms in which poets should cast their
tales, and the limits which must be observed by
them, but to make the tales is not their business.

Very true, he said; but what are these forms of
theology which you mean?

Something of this kind, I replied: — God is
always to be represented as he truly is, whatever

be the sort of poetry, epic, lyric or tragic, in which
the representation is given.

Right.

And is he not truly good? And must he not be
represented as such?

Certainly.

And no good thing is hurtful?

No, indeed.

And that which is not hurtful hurts not?

Certainly not.
 And that which hurts not does not evil?
 No.
 And can that which does not evil be a cause of evil?
 Impossible.
 And the good is advantageous?
 Yes.
 And therefore the cause of well-being?
 Yes.

It follows therefore that the good is not the cause of all things, but of the good only?

Assuredly.
 Then God, if he be good, is not the author of all things, as the many assert, but he is the cause of a few things only, and not of most things that occur to men. For few are the goods of human life, and many are the evils, and the good is to be attributed to God alone; of the evils the causes are to be sought elsewhere, and not in him.

That appears to me to be most true, he said.
 Well, but can you imagine that God will be willing to lie, whether in word or deed, or to put forth a phantom of himself?

I cannot say, he replied.
 Do you not know, I said, that the true life, if such an expression may be allowed, is hated of gods and men?

What do you mean? he said.
 I mean that no one is willingly deceived in that which is the truest and highest part of himself, or about the truest and highest matters; there, above all, he is most afraid of a lie having possession of him.

Still, he said, I do not comprehend you.
 The reason is, I replied, that you attribute some profound meaning to my words; but I am only saying that deception, or being deceived or uninformed about the highest realities in the highest part of themselves, which is the soul, and in that part of them to have and to hold the lie, is what mankind least like; — that, I say, is what they utterly detest.

There is nothing more hateful to them.
 And, as I was just now remarking, this ignorance in the soul of him who is deceived may be called the true lie; for the lie in words is only a kind of imitation and shadowy image of a previous affection of the soul, not pure unadulterated falsehood. Am I not right?

Perfectly right.
 The true lie is hated not only by the gods, but also by men?
 Yes.

Whereas the lie in words is in certain cases useful and not hateful; in dealing with enemies — that would be an instance; or again, when those whom we call our friends in a fit of madness or illusion are going to do some harm, then it is useful and is a sort of medicine or preventive; also in the tales of mythology, of which we were just now speaking — because we do not know the truth about ancient times, we make falsehood as much like truth as we can, and so turn it to account.

Very true, he said.
 But can any of these reasons apply to God? Can we suppose that he is ignorant of antiquity, and therefore has recourse to invention?

That would be ridiculous, he said.
 Then the lying poet has no place in our idea of God?

I should say not.
 Or perhaps he may tell a lie because he is afraid of enemies?

That is inconceivable.
 But he may have friends who are senseless or mad?

But no mad or senseless person can be a friend of God.

Then no motive can be imagined why God should lie?

None whatever.
 Then the superhuman and divine is absolutely incapable of falsehood?

Yes.
 Then is God perfectly simple and true both in word and deed; he changes not; he deceives not, either by sign or word, by dream or waking vision.

Your thoughts, he said, are the reflection of my own.

You agree with me then, I said, that this is the second type or form in which we should write and speak about divine things. . . . [This, then, is the basis for ordering justice in the State, and in the souls of citizens.]

STOICS - Epictetus (50-138 AD)

His views closer to Xnty than other Stoics

1. what issues or persons would they respond to?

- apatheia - a loss of passions (v. Plato & Ari who seek to moderate the passions) as passions distort reality
- ~~birth as Plato, inner image of ladder~~
- loss of faith in the city-state

2. what is impact or trajectory on modern social ethics?

- emphasis on virtues, as apatheia, stressing patience, self-restraint, humility, perseverance, peace of mind, self-exam
- stressed an "ethical rationality" (Max 137)
- influence on Kant
- influence on virtue ethicists

3. what are the theological implications?

- there is a divine order to the universe - logos, reason
yet this is pantheistic; no sep. betw. creator & creature
- Paul's virtue lists echo stoics
- Paul using stoic language & concept of loving the divine, seeking to return to the divine (ie. imitate X)
- Xnty rejects stoicism as a system (due to pantheism) but the language helped Xnty express their conceptions.
- Epictetus wrote of brotherhood of God, brotherhood of man (Cicero, too)

The Laws

Cicero
(106-43 BC)

(a Stoic) like Heraclitus, Zeno, Epictetus
(much of earlier Stoic thought unknown from Cicero)
300 BCE

Hortensius 1. what persons or issues being responded to?

- decline of Athens/Greek naturalism, ^{through} ^{the Greek} ^{Stoics} ^{"recovered"}
- a response to Plato's state-dominated political philosophy & Aristotle's household-dominated political philosophy
- ~~influence~~

2. impact/trajectory on other thinkers & modern social ethics?

- natural law as a moral concept, less as an empirical law ^{nature} of things, i.e. tell right from wrong; accented a sense of duty
- * trajectory seen in: modern democracy, human rights, & mass markets due to Stoic challenge to ancient tribal societies
- influenced all natural law theorists down to Hume's Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion

Stoics { • natural law is an objective standard for both morals & law, based on reason, and discernable by wise people, forming basis for Roman law

3. theological implications?

- emphasizes: equality before a universal moral law
"state must live in accord w/ justice & not impair a-brother's laws"
"humanity" is the chief source of authority
- major similarities to early Xus
- assertion of human rights & brotherhood of man

Stoics { • natural law → Aquinas

- did not believe in afterlife or another realm
- Augustine read Cicero's Hortensius & felt it was a ^{experience} conversion
- Calvin 1.3.1 "w/ human mind & by natural instinct there is awareness of divinity" citing Cicero
- Stoic emph. on providence — human suffering can happen even in ordered cosmos

Cicero (106 – 43BC)
(a Stoic)

- great influence on Augustine, through his now lost *Hortensio*
- he spoke of a law is not one law in Athens and another in Rome, but the same everywhere because it is written into the structure of reality (Lovin, 48)

Laws (De Legibus)

(From OMB)

- “there can be but one essential justice, which cements society, and one law which establishes this justice. This law is right reason, which is the true rule of all commandments and prohibitions.”
- “we have no other rule capable of distinguishing between a good or bad law, than our natural conscience and reason.... For common sense has impressed upon our minds the first principles of things...by which we connect every Virtue what is honorable and excellent quality, and with Vice all that is abominable and disgraceful...”
- he rejects utilitarianism and the Epicureans

From the intro:

- *De Legibus* is a sequel to *De Re Publica* (Plato's *Laws* was not a sequel to his *Republic*). Cicero is the main character; done in dialogue form. Greater part of first three books is extant: 1) covers universal Law and Justice in general; 2) proposes and explains the religious laws of his State; 3) statement and defense of law pertaining to State officials, while also discussing the legislative, judicial, and executive powers
- 317 – “law is the highest reason, implanted in Nature which commands what ought to be done and forbids the opposite. This reason, when firmly fixed and highly developed in the human mind, is Law. An so they believe that Law is intelligence, whose natural function it is to command right conduct and forbid wrongdoing.”
- 317 “they think that this quality has derived its name in the Greek from the idea of granting to every man his own [*nomos* derived from *nemo*, meaning “to distribute”], and in our language I believe it has been named from the idea of choosing [*lex*, coming from *lego*, “to choose”]. [MacIntyre also notes this...] For as they [the Greeks] have attributed the idea of fairness to the word of law, so we have given it that of selection, though both ideas properly belong to law.”
- 317 “Then the origin of Justice is to be found in Law, for Law is a natural force; it is the mind and reason of the intelligent man, the standard by which justice and injustice are measured.” [thus he is talking about “natural law” not civic law, in human rights tradition and MLK appropriated.] ✓
- 323 – on the origins of Justice: “a time came which was suitable for sowing the seed of the human race...it was granted the gift of the divine soul... the soul was generated in us by God. Hence we are justified in saying that there is a blood relationship between ourselves and the celestial beings; or we may say a common ancestry or origin.” [he sounds like Calvin!]
- 325 – “virtue exists in man and God alike, but in no other creature besides; virtue however is nothing else than Nature perfected and developed to its highest point; therefore, there is a likeness between man and God.” [we are created in God's image!]
- 351 – “Justice must be sought and cultivated for her own sake.” *Plato ref.*

The Republic (de re publica – meaning public thing or property)

- followed in the footsteps of his beloved Plato, naming it no doubt in honor of him; the dialogue lasts three days is assumed to have taken place in an earlier time.
- Not easy to transfer Greek ideas in Latin periods

Book I:

- defines the commonwealth (republic)
- discusses dialectically (pros and cons) of three forms of government (kingship, aristocracy, and democracy), opting for a balance a combination of the three forms; its stability; its ideal character
- uses the Roman State as an example of the ideal state
- 15 – “*Nature has implanted in the human race so great a need of virtue and so great a desire to defend the common safety that the strength thereof has conquered all the allurements of pleasure and ease.*” [rejecting the Epicureans]
- 15 – “*but it is not enough to possess virtue, as if it were an art of some sort, unless you make use of it.*” [Aristotle influence] “*It’s noblest use is in the government of the State.*”
- 17 sees *government as a necessary constraining force* [Plato influence]
- 31 Tubero says Scipio, “*It is your duty to relax your mind also.*”
- 57 importance of acquiring the arts which make one useful to the State, “*for I consider this the noblest function of wisdom, and the highest duty of virtue as well as the best proof of its possession.*”
- 65 – Scipio says, “*a commonwealth is the property of a people... large number associated in an agreement with respect to justice and a partnership for the common good. The first cause for this association is not so much the weakness of the individual as a certain social spirit which nature has implanted in man.*” [cf. Ari’s ‘political animal’]
- 75 “*law is the bond which unites the civic association, and the justice enforced by law is the same for all*”... “*For if we cannot agree to equalize men’s wealth, and equality of innate ability is impossible, the legal rights at least of those who are citizens of the same common wealth ought to be equal.*”

Book II:

- traces history of the Roman State
- discusses the ideal Statesman and the necessity for justice in States
- 125 “*for wealth at that time [founding of Rome, 390 BC] consisted of domestic animals (pecus) and the ownership of places (loci) and from these two kinds of property we get our words “wealthy” (pecuniosus) and “rich” (locuples)*”

Book III: (Augustine quotes some of the lost pages in his work, *De Civ. Dei*)

- nature of man
- human reason
- its noblest function is found in practical statesmanship, which is superior to devotion to political theory alone; the practical minded Romans therefore to be set above the theoretically minded Greeks
- reason is the foundation of justice
- arguments about the necessity of injustice and justice in governments; Scipio shows that by practical examples that any government that is just is therefore a good

government, and without justice any form of government is bad; a commonwealth cannot exist without justice

- 189 – contra Ari, he sees Statesmanship as more noble than contemplative learning and reflection, if one has to choose between the two
- 191 – “We who seek Justice, which is much more valuable than all the gold in the world, surely ought not shrink from any hardship.”
- 211 – “*True law is right reason in agreement with nature*; it is of universal application, unchanging and everlasting; it summons to duty by its commandments, and avert from wrongdoing by its prohibitions... it is a *sin to try to alter this law*... we cannot be freed from its obligations by senate or people, and *we need not look outside ourselves for an expounder or interpreter of it*.... There will not be different laws... but *one eternal and unchangeable law will be valid for all nations and all times*, and there will be *one master and ruler, that is, God*, over us all, for *he is the author of this law*, its promulgator, and its enforcing judge. *Whoever is disobedient, is fleeing from himself and denying his human nature*, and by reason of this very fact he will suffer the worst penalties, even if he escapes what is commonly considered punishment.”

Book IV: (only fragments remain)

- appears to discuss: social classification of citizens; maintenance of high moral standards [rejects Plato's concept of sharing of wives, and the practice of old men having sex with young boys]; education of the young; influence of drama

Book V: (completely lost)

- appears to have been a treatment of the law, its enforcement and the ideal Statesman

Book VI:

- the great value and noble reward of the Statesman's labors
- the work closes with “Scipio's dream,” which extends this theme beyond the world and the brief span of human life into the universe and eternity; an account of a mystical experience which carries the reader beyond the boundaries of the present life

Add'l Cicero quotes, cited elsewhere:

Augustine draws on Cicero in his City of God:

- Justice is the first condition required for a city (drawing on Cicero's concept that every society should resemble a symphonic concert where different notes and instruments blend together in harmony), and Rome had long lost any sense of justice
- Cicero (*Republic*, 223) writes, “a people [or a Republic] exists only when the individuals who form it are held together by a partnership in justice.” Augustine uses this idealized definition to show that Rome was never a Republic, saying “true justice had never a place in it.” (CD, II, 21)

Cicero

57011
100-43BC

Aristotelian thought in antiquity tended toward naturalism. It was later developed by the Muslims and still later became adapted to major developments in Christian thinking, especially by St. Thomas Aquinas; but in the ancient world, it temporarily lost influence. Generally, Athens declined when Rome conquered Greece and established its empire. New forms of internationalism developed in politics, ethics, and religion as trade brought people into contact with one another. People had to begin to think in more cosmopolitan terms than the theories of city-state and household allowed.

The most impressive ethical teachings came from a group of philosophers called the "Stoics." Heraclitus, Zeno, and others gave lectures on a famous porch (or stoa in Greek) some three hundred years before Christ. They emphasized the idea of "natural law" as a moral concept, less as an empirical "law of nature" than as a general human ability to tell right from wrong. Because of this, it made little difference to Stoics whether one was Jewish or pagan, Roman or Greek, African or European, rich or poor, male or female. The human moral capacity was the same for all — if, that is, it was exercised with discipline and equanimity, for otherwise it became corrupted by local customs and foolish passions.

Stoics thus accented a sense of duty, a cosmopolitan sense of the human community, a moral approach to religious issues, and a studied control of the passions. Such a combination generated reliable administrators, managers, jurists and teachers. Their honest, incorruptible, and impartial performance of duty brought them much respect. It is said that through these Stoics, Greece reconquered Rome from the inside. Certainly, the moral and legal fabric of the Roman

Empire, perhaps the most just regime of its sort the world had ever seen, became the embodiment of "Greco-Roman" philosophy.

Cicero represents a "romanized" phase of Stoic thought. In his Laws, he modifies the Greek notion of justice by developing an idea of "humanity" as a chief source of authority. He emphasizes equality before a universal moral law, and thus the notion that the state must live in accord with justice and not simply impose arbitrary laws, in the same way that an individual must live in accord with ethical principles and not simply choose personal values.

One can see certain similarities between early Christianity and the Stoics, and elements of Stoic thought can be found in the New Testament and early church writings, partly because they were pervasive at that time, and partly because there were striking parallels between early church teachings and Stoic thought. Stoic ideas later were utilized by reformers among medieval, reformation, and American colonial thinkers — especially those who tried to develop a theological view of law, politics, and economics. Ideas of modern democracy, human rights, and mass markets might not have developed without the Stoics' moral challenges to the ancient tribal societies, the state-dominated political philosophy of Plato, or the household-dominated political philosophy of Aristotle, however much the Hebrews and the Greeks contributed to human understanding.

On Justice, Law, and Nature

Cicero

With respect to the true principle of justice, many learned men have maintained that it springs from Law. I hardly know if their opinion be not correct, at least, according to their own definition: for "Law (say they) is the highest reason, implanted in nature, which prescribes those things which ought to be done, and forbids the contrary." This, they think, is apparent from the converse of the proposition; because this same reason, when it is confirmed and established in men's minds, is the law of all their actions.

They therefore conceive that the voice of conscience is a law, that moral prudence is a law, whose operation is to urge us to good actions, and restrain us from evil ones. They think, too, that the Greek name for law (*νομος*), which is derived from *νέμω*, to distribute, implies the very nature of the thing, that is, to give every man his due. For my part, I imagine that the moral essence of law is better expressed by its Latin name, (*lex*), which conveys the idea of selection or discrimination. According to the Greeks, therefore, the name of law implies an equitable distribution of goods: according to the Romans, an equitable discrimination between good and evil.

The true definition of law should, however, include both these characteristics. And this being granted as an almost self-evident proposition, the origin of justice is to be sought in the divine law of eternal and immutable morality. This indeed is

the true energy of nature, the very soul and essence of wisdom, the test of virtue and vice. But since every discussion must relate to some subject, whose terms are of frequent occurrence in the popular language of the citizens, we shall be sometimes obliged to use the same terms as the vulgar, and to conform to that common idiom which signifies by the word law, all the arbitrary regulations which are found in our statute books, either commanding or forbidding certain actions.

We should seek for justice in its native source, which being discovered, we shall afterwards be able to speak with more authority and precision respecting our civil laws, that come home to the affairs of our citizens.

I shall endeavor to describe a system of Laws adapted to that Commonwealth, which Scipio declares to be most desirable in those Six Books which I have written under that title. All our laws, therefore, are to be accommodated to that mixed kind of political government there recommended. We shall also treat of the general principles of morals and manners, which appear most appropriate to such a constitution of society, but without descending to particular details.

Grant me that the entire universe is overruled by the power of God, that by his nature, reason, energy, mind, divinity, or some other word of clearer signification, all things are governed and directed. . . . Since you grant me the existence of God, and the superintendence of Providence, I maintain that he has been especially beneficent to man. This human animal — prescient, sagacious, complex, acute, full of memory, reason and counsel, which we call man, — is generated by the supreme God in a more transcendent condition than most of his fellow-creatures. For he is the only creature among the earthly races of animated beings endued with superior reason and thought, in which the rest are deficient. And what is there, I do not say in man alone, but in all heaven and earth, more divine than reason, which, when it becomes ripe and perfect, is justly termed wisdom?

There exists, therefore, since nothing is better than reason, and since this is the common property of God and man, a certain aboriginal rational intercourse between divine and human natures. This reason, which is common to both, therefore, can be none other than right reason; and since this

Markus Tullius Cicero, *The Laws*, trans. Francis Barham (1841), in *Introduction to Contemporary Civilization in the West*, 3rd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), vol. 1, pp. 61-73.

right reason is what we call Law, God and men are said by Law to be consociated. Between whom, since there is a communion of law, there must be also a communication of Justice.

Law and Justice being thus the common rule of immortals and mortals, it follows that they are both the fellow-citizens of one city and commonwealth. And if they are obedient to the same rule, the same authority and denomination, they may with still closer propriety be termed fellow-citizens, since one celestial regency, one divine mind, one omnipotent Deity then regulates all their thoughts and actions.

This universe, therefore, forms one immeasurable Commonwealth and city, common alike to gods and mortals. And as in earthly states, certain particular laws, which we shall hereafter describe, govern the particular relationships of kindred tribes; so in the nature of things doth an universal law, far more magnificent and resplendent, regulate the affairs of that universal city where gods and men compose one vast association.

When we thus reason on universal nature, we are accustomed to reason after this method. We believe that in the long course of ages and the uninterrupted succession of celestial revolutions, the seed of the human race was sown on our planet, and being scattered over the earth, was animated by the divine gift of souls. Thus men retained from their terrestrial origin, their perishable and mortal bodies, while their immortal spirits were ingenerated by Deity. From which consideration we are bold to say that we possess a certain consanguinity and kindred fellowship with the celestials. And so far as we know, among all the varieties of animals, man alone retains the idea of the Divinity. And among men there is no nation so savage and ferocious as to deny the necessity of worshipping God, however ignorant it may be respecting the nature of his attributes. From whence we conclude that every man must recognize a Deity, who considers the origin of his nature and the progress of his life.

Now the law of virtue is the same in God and man, and cannot possibly be diverse. This virtue is nothing else than a nature perfect in itself, and developed in all its excellence. There exists therefore a similitude between God and man; nor can any knowledge be more appropriate and sterling than what relates to this divine similitude.

Nature, attentive to our wants, offers us her treasures with the most graceful profusion. And it is easy to perceive that the benefits which flow from her are true and veritable gifts, which Providence has provided on purpose for human enjoyment, and not the fortuitous productions of her exuberant fecundity. Her liberality appears, not only in the fruits and vegetables which gush from the bosom of the earth, but likewise in cattle and the beasts of the field. It is clear that some of these are intended from the advantage of mankind, a part for propagation, and a part for food. Innumerable arts have likewise been discovered by the teaching of nature; for her doth reason imitate, and skillfully discover all things necessary to the happiness of life. . . .

As the Deity, therefore, was pleased to create man as the chief and president of all terrestrial creatures, so it is evident, without further argument, that human nature has made the greatest advances by its intrinsic energy; that nature, which without any other instruction than her own, has developed the first rude principles of the understanding, and strengthened and perfected reason to all the appliances of science and art.

You may well describe these topics as grand, which we are now briefly discussing. For of all the questions on which our philosophers argue, there is none which it is more important thoroughly to understand than this, that man is born for justice, and that law and equity are not a mere establishment of opinion, but an institution of nature. This truth will become still more apparent if we investigate the nature of human association and society.

There is no one thing more like to another, more homogeneous and analogous, than man is to man. And if the corruption of customs, and the variation of opinions, had not induced an imbecility of minds, and turned them aside from the course of nature, no one would more nearly resemble himself than all men would resemble all men. Therefore whatever definition we give of man, it must include the whole human race. And this is a good argument, that no portion of mankind can be heterogeneous or dissimilar from the rest; because, if this were the case, one definition could not include all men.

In fact, reason, which alone gives us so many advantages over beasts, by means of which we con-

jecture, argue, refute, discourse, and accomplish and conclude our designs, is assuredly common to all men; for the faculty of acquiring knowledge is similar in all human minds, though the knowledge itself may be endlessly diversified. By the same senses we all perceive the same objects, and that which strikes the sensibilities of the few, cannot be indifferent to those of the many. Those first rude elements of intelligence which, as I before observed, are the earliest developments of thought, are similarly exhibited by all men; and that faculty of speech which is the soul's interpreter, agrees in the ideas it conveys, though it may differ in the syllables that express them. And therefore there exists not a man in any nation, who, adopting his true nature for his true guide, may not improve in virtue.

Nor is this resemblance which all men bear to each other remarkable in those things only which accord to right reason. For it is scarcely less conspicuous in those corrupt practices by which right reason is most cruelly violated. For all men alike are captivated by voluptuousness, which is in reality no better than disgraceful vice, though it may seem to bear some natural relations to goodness; for by its delicious delicacy and luxury it insinuates error into the mind, and leads us to cultivate it as something salutary, forgetful of its poisonous qualities. . . .

It follows, then, in the line of our argument, that nature made us just that we might participate our goods with each other, and supply each other's wants. You observe in this discussion whenever I speak of nature, I mean nature in its genuine purity, and not in the corrupt state which is displayed by the depravity of evil custom, which is so great, that the natural and innate flame of virtue is often almost extinguished and stifled by the antagonistic vices, which are accumulated around it.

But if our true nature would assert her rights, and teach men the noble lesson of the poet, who says, "I am a man, therefore no human interest can be indifferent to me,"—then would justice be administered equally by all and to all. For nature hath not merely given us reason, but right reason, and consequently that law, which is nothing else than right reason-enjoining what is good, and forbidding what is evil. . . .

There can be but one essential justice, which cements society, and one law which establishes this

justice. This law is right reason, which is the true rule of all commandments and prohibitions. Whoever neglects this law, whether written or unwritten, is necessarily unjust and wicked.

But if justice consists in submission to written laws and national customs, and if, as the Epicureans persist in affirming, everything must be measured by utility alone, he who wishes to find an occasion of breaking such laws and customs, will be sure to discover it. So that real justice remains powerless if not supported by nature, and this pretended justice is overturned by that very utility which they call its foundation.

But this is not all. If nature does not ratify law, all the virtues lose their sway. What becomes of generosity, patriotism, or friendship? Where should we find the desire of benefiting our neighbors, or the gratitude that acknowledges kindness? For all these virtues proceed from our natural inclination to love and cherish our associates. This is the true basis of justice, and without this, not only the mutual charities of men, but the religious services of the gods, would become obsolete; for these are preserved, as I imagine, rather by the natural sympathy which subsists between divine and human beings, than by mere fear and timidity.

If the will of the people, the decrees of the senate, the adjudications of magistrates, were sufficient to establish justice, the only question would be how to gain suffrages, and to win over the votes of the majority, in order that corruption and spoliation, and the falsification of wills, should become lawful. But if the opinions and suffrages of foolish men had sufficient weight to outbalance the nature of things, might they not determine among them, that what is essentially bad and pernicious should henceforth pass for good and beneficial? Or why should not a law able to enforce injustice, take the place of equity? Would not this same law be able to change evil into good, and good into evil?

As far as we are concerned, we have no other rule capable of distinguishing between a good or a bad law, than our natural conscience and reason. These, however, enable us to separate justice from injustice, and to discriminate between the honest and the scandalous. For common sense has impressed in our minds the first principles of things, and has given us a general acquaintance with them, by which we connect with Virtue every

CLASSICAL RESOURCES

honorable and excellent quality, and with Vice all that is abominable and disgraceful. . . .

Besides this, if we weigh virtue by the mere utility and profit that attend it, and not by its own merit, the virtue which results will be in fact a species of vice. For the more a man's views are self-interested, the further he recedes from probity. It therefore necessarily happens, that those who measure virtue by profit, acknowledge no other virtue than this usurious vice. For who could be called benevolent, if none endeavored to do good for the love of others? Where could we find the grateful person, if those who are disposed to gratitude could meet no benefactor disinterested enough to deserve it? What would become of sacred friendship, if we were not to love our friends for their own sake with all our heart and soul? In pursuance of this pseudo-benevolence, we must desert our friend, as soon as we can derive no further assistance from him. What can be more inhuman! But if friendship ought rather to be cultivated on its own account, for the same reason are society, equality, and justice, desirable for themselves. If this were not so, there could be no justice at all, since nothing is more opposite to the very essence of virtue than selfish interest.

300-400 AD
Roman Empire

Neo-Platonism

Middle

Plotinus (205-70 AD)

On True Happiness

(Greek Neoplatonist. b. in Egypt, travelled to Persia; set up school in Rome)

Enneads

1. what issues/persons are they responding to? - rejects dualism
 - problem of the one & the many;
 - builds on Plato, but moves away from the Forms
 - like Plato, sees phil. as a journey to return to the One
 - great influence on Augustine
 - rejects Plato's dualistic thought
 - tries to reshape Plato's metaphysics, in a system akin to Aristotle

uses image of ladder
various levels of being

2. what is the impact/trajectory on modern social ethics?

- continued development of terminology (3 hypostases or divine substances: One, Mind, Soul)
- argued that the higher "spiritual" are intension w/ the "sensible" material activities, and that the higher must control the lower (ie spirituality v. materialism w/in a monistic system) but the lower is not evil, as some argued, although the spiritual is better
- influenced the Cappadocians, and Augustine
- necessity of both reason & experience

Plato's - general → partic.
→ Arist. - partic. → gen.

3. what are the theological implications?

- ① - sought a unifying principle behind the world to explain how the One gives rise to the many.
 - similar religious insight to Plato
- ② - we fall or forgotten the vision of the One, so the goal of Philosophy is to return to the One; purify the soul
 - what causes this fall?
- ③ - how do we find our way back?
 - creation happens (not ex nihilo) by a cascading overflow of the goodness of the One's love (similar to Plato's Timaeus)

(Kierkegaard says we've chosen to sin - the corrupted freedom)

10/5/1998 lecture (from tape): Stoicism, Neo-Platonism and Augustine

Stoics – Stoic cosmology the world itself is essentially a divine whole, held together in a coherent form, which is the principle of reason which runs throughout the world. This divine principle is the logos. Stoics had a highly developed sense of logic (from logos!), proper reason allowed people to see things the way they were, and see what God intended. One problem with seeing the world as divine, is that there's no separation between creator and creation, like pantheism, the whole world is God. Platonism, neo-Platonism and Xnty all had a problem with this, as they saw God as transcendent, and different than creation. Latin 'love of faith', faith is providence, reason is providence for the Greek Stoics (providence to them is not fate, as in Roman Stoics thought, but a logos which accepts the good and bad which nature brings us, everything is seen to have a purpose in God's orderly cosmos – Xns develop this, especially Augustine and Calvin). The point of reasoning, to see things the way they are (as beautiful, to love it; Stoics did not believe in another world or after-life; 'this world is home'), and why they couldn't be any other way. Hallmark of Stoicism is virtues: apatheia (apathy, a loss of the passions – contrasts with Plato and Ari who want to moderate the passions – Stoics felt the passions made us see things other than they really are).

Epictetus (a highly educated Greek slave, who taught the Romans) a leading Stoic philosopher, 50-138AD, and source of much of our knowledge of Stoicism. Many Xn virtues flow from Stoic concept of apatheia: patience; self-restraint; perseverance; humility; peace of mind; self-esteem. Paul's list of virtues shows echoes of these Stoic virtues, which sees God present in this world and praises it. How does Epictetus form his personality? By loving the divine, by loving reality, by identifying with the divine. Xnty builds on this concept, that we must identify with Christ, to get our real personality. So Xnty rejects Stoicism as a system (due to pantheism) but the language really helped Xns express their conceptions. Paul often uses the word "hyponami" for faith (which means waiting, or patience), waiting upon God. But to believe in God's providence also means to be active, to Paul, and that even when the world seems evil, we are to have hope that God is still in charge.

Neo-Platonist continued Plato's tradition of there being a transcendent God. Plotinus system is actually extremely complex. But his religious insights are very similar to Plato. He had a transcendent vision, showing a vision of unity of the world under a transcendent force, the One. Yet we've fallen from this vision... we are distant from that transcendent God; a sense of alienation. But a sense that there is a connection. So it becomes the goal of philosophy to return to the One. Actively return back to the home which he feels the soul has lost (which makes him very attractive to Xn thinkers). SO Augustine's conversion isn't triumphal, but shows how far we have really fallen, and the way to return, to find the way back to the reality of the One which we only see from a distance.

Plotinus systems begs three questions:

- How can the world be united under a transcendent force (the One); the world seems to be diverse, multiplicity, falling apart. So what unites it?
- What causes the fall? Why has the soul fallen, become distant?
- How do we find our way back?

To Plotinus, the One is the chief reality. The world is created by a cascading overflow of the goodness of the One's love (similar to Plato's Timaeus). The farther one gets away from the One, the less one sees of the One.

-the one-many problem

Plotinus

Many were not satisfied with either Aristotle's "naturalism" or Stoic "ethical rationality." They did not think them utterly false, but they were more attracted to certain themes from Plato — especially his emphasis on intuitive knowledge at the depth of the soul, his notion of an intelligible God (he was the first to coin the word "theology"), and his treatment of the desire of the deepest self for direct knowledge of the source and structures of meaning. Such themes anticipate much of Western mysticism as well as the depth psychology and psychiatry of today.

cf. higher levels
wisdom
Plato
Forms → ladder

The result was "Neo-Platonism," and its greatest representative was Plotinus. In his *Enneads*, he used the image of a ladder of being, a great hierarchy of qualitative existence, to organize his thought about the world. At the higher levels are those realities that are known by spiritual wisdom, similar to the more "mystical" side of Plato. At the lower levels are the human and social realities, and below that, the material realities that are known by the material sciences, much as could be found in Aristotle's work. All levels are "real," but the higher levels are more enduring, while the lower ones are more temporal. Comparative scholars tell us that Plotinus's theories are, in major respects, similar to certain classical philosophies of non-Western civilizations, such as India and China.

Plotinus became the single most influential philosopher between the ancient world and the later periods when Aristotle was reintroduced to the West by Muslim scholars in the Middle Ages and Stoic theories were recovered by jurists and political theorists in the Renaissance and Reformation. Plotinus was, for example, the most important philosophical influence on St. Augustine, and through him on much of Western Christianity.

A central claim in Plotinus's view has many implications for economy and society. This is the claim that a tension stands between activities that are sensible (material, earthly, open to empirical investigation) and those activities which are spiritual (divine, heavenly, and open to intelligible investigation). One is clearly "higher" than the other, and thus no one could expect bodily (or material or economic) matters to be spiritual. Unless they are guided and controlled by what is "higher," they are devoid of intellectual and spiritual principle, as every "Sage" (anyone who is a truly wise philosopher) knows. Yet he argued against those who think that material, bodily, and economic realities are evil. All that exists is good; but higher mind is better than lower body. Thus Plotinus is the intellectual forebear of modern, wholistic theories of ecology and intelligence. Still, here is a classic statement of the view that spirituality and materialism are the great opposites within a single monistic system and that the increase of one brings the decrease of the other, a view that often made religion and business strangers if not enemies.

Such a view easily fit into the developing practices of monasticism. It also gave philosophical justifications for the attempts to preserve spiritual and intellectual life during the later decline and fall of the Roman Empire and the plunge into the "Dark Ages." Various accents in Plotinus's thought have found echoes among modern thinkers, from transcendentalist Henry David Thoreau to evolutionist Teilhard de Chardin to process philosopher Alfred North Whitehead. In any case, its greatest strength is in these questions: What holds the whole together, and what finally can we rely on when the things of the world fall apart?

On True Happiness

Plotinus

Are we to make True Happiness one and the same thing with Welfare or Prosperity and therefore within the reach of other living beings as well as ourselves?

There is certainly no reason to deny well-being to any of them as long as their lot allows them to flourish unhindered after their kind.

Whether we make Welfare consist in pleasant conditions of life, or in the accomplishment of some appropriate task, by either account it may fall to them as to us. For certainly they may at once be pleasantly placed and engaged about some function that lies in their nature: take for an instance such living beings as have the gift of music; finding themselves well-off in other ways, they sing, too, as their nature is, and so their day is pleasant to them. . . .

It may be a distasteful notion, this bringing-down of happiness so low as to the animal world — making it over, as then we must, even to the vilest of them and not withholding it even from the plants. . . .

But, to begin with, it is surely unsound to deny that good of life to animals only because they do not appear to man to be of great account. And as for plants, we need not necessarily allow them what we accord to the other forms of life, since they have no feeling. It is true people might be found to declare property possible to the very plants: they have life, and life may bring good or evil; the plants may thrive or wither, bear or be barren.

No: if Pleasure be the Term, if here be the good

of life, it is impossible to deny the good of life to any order of living things; if the Term be inner-peace, equally impossible; impossible, too, if the good of life be to live in accordance with the purpose of nature. . . .

What then is happiness? Let us try basing it upon Life.

Now if we draw no distinction as to kinds of life, everything that lives will be capable of happiness, and those will be effectively happy who possess that one common gift of which every living thing is by nature receptive. We could not deny it to the irrational whilst allowing it to the rational. If happiness were inherent in the bare being-alive, the common ground in which the cause of happiness could always take root would be simply life. . . .

Now in common use this word "Life" embraces many forms which shade down from primal to secondary and so on, all massed under the common term — life of plant and life of animal — each phase brighter or dimmer than its next: and so it evidently must be with the Good-of-Life. And if thing is ever the image of thing, so every Good must always be the image of a higher Good.

If mere Being is insufficient, if happiness demands fullness of life, and exists, therefore, where nothing is lacking of all that belongs to the idea of life, then happiness can exist only in a being that lives fully.

And such a one will possess not merely the good, but the Supreme Good if, that is to say, in the realm of existents the Supreme Good can be no other than the authentically living, no other than Life in its greatest plenitude, life in which the good is present as something essential not as something brought in from without, a life needing no foreign substance called in from a foreign realm, to establish it in good. . . .

It has been said more than once that the perfect life and the true life, the essential life, is in the Intellectual Nature beyond this sphere, and that all other forms of life are incomplete, are phantoms of life, imperfect, not pure, not more truly life than they are: contrary: here let it be said succinctly that since all living things proceed from the one principle but possess life in different degrees, this principle must be the first life and the most complete.

If, then, the perfect life is within human reach,

Plotinus, "Tractate Four," in *The Six Enneads*, trans. S. MacKenna and B. S. Page (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), pp. 12-21.

the man attaining it attains happiness: if not, happiness must be made over to the gods, for the perfect life is for them alone.

But since we hold that happiness is for human beings too, we must consider what this perfect life is. The matter may be stated thus: . . . there exists no single human being that does not either potentially or effectively possess this thing which we hold to constitute happiness.

But are we to think of man as including this form of life, the perfect, after the manner of a partial constituent of his entire nature?

We say, rather, that while in some men it is present as a mere portion of their total being — in those, namely, that have it potentially — there is, too, the man, already in possession of true felicity, who is this perfection realized, who has passed over into actual identification with it. All else is now mere clothing about the man, not to be called part of him since it lies about him unsought, not his because not appropriated to himself by any act of the will. . . .

The sign that this state has been achieved is that the man seeks nothing else.

What indeed could he be seeking? Certainly none of the less worthy things; and the Best he carries always within him.

He that has such a life as this has all he needs in life.

Once the man is a Sage, the means of happiness, the way to good, are within, for nothing is good that lies outside him. Anything he desires further than this he seeks as a necessity, and not for himself but for a subordinate, for the body bound to him, to which since it has life he must minister the needs of life, not needs, however, to the true man of this degree. He knows himself to stand above all such things, and what he gives to the lower he so gives as to leave his true life undiminished.

Adverse fortune does not shake his felicity: the life so founded is stable ever. . . .

The pleasure demanded for the Sage's life cannot be in the enjoyments of the licentious or in any gratifications of the body — there is no place for these, and they stifle happiness — nor in any violent emotions — what could so move the Sage? — it can be only such pleasure as there must be where Good is, pleasure that does not rise from movement and is not a thing of process, for all

that is good is immediately present to the Sage and the Sage is present to himself: his pleasure, his contentment, stands immovable.

Thus he is ever cheerful, the order of his life ever untroubled: his state is fixedly happy and nothing whatever of all that is known as evil can set it awry — given only that he is and remains a Sage.

If anyone seeks for some other kind of pleasure in the life of the Sage, it is not the life of the Sage he is looking for. . . .

A powerful frame, a healthy constitution, even a happy balance of temperament, these surely do not make felicity; in the excess of these advantages there is, even, the danger that the man be crushed down and forced more and more within their power. There must be a sort of counter-pressure in the other direction, towards the noblest: the body must be lessened, reduced, that the veritable man may show forth, the man behind the appearances.

Let the earth-bound man be handsome and powerful and rich, and so apt to this world that he may rule the entire human race: still there can be no envying him, the fool of such lures. Perhaps such splendors could not, from the beginning even, have gathered to the Sage; but if it should happen so, he of his own action will lower his state, if he has any care for his true life; the tyranny of the body he will work down or wear away by inattention to its claims; the rulership he will lay aside. . . .

This does not make the Sage unfriendly or harsh: it is to himself and in his own great concern that he is the Sage: giving freely to his intimates of all he has to give, he will be the best of friends by his very union with the Intellectual-Principle.

Those that refuse to place the Sage aloft in the Intellectual Realm but drag him down to the accidental, dreading accident for him, have substituted for the Sage we have in mind another person altogether; they offer us a tolerable sort of man and they assign to him a life of mingled good and ill, a case, after all, not easy to conceive. But admitting the possibility of such a mixed state, it could not be deserved to be called a life of happiness; it misses the Great, both in the dignity of Wisdom and in the integrity of Good.

10/7/1998 lecture

Plotinus' vision of the One, but how do we stay in or return to the experience of the One? Finding a way back. In this sense, both Plato and Plotinus saw Philosophy as a journey to return to the One, which unites diversity.

The One, it's goodness overflows, gives emanations and therefore multiplicity. The whole created world somehow flows or emanates from the One. Gradations of being, eventually reaches down to a point of nothingness. But there are traces, or hints, in the world of the One, indeed the whole world is from the One. Thus the image of moving up, from a low understanding to a higher understanding of the One until one actually becomes unified with the one. This is the broad picture of how the diversity unifies.

Plotinus has three main "hypostases" or divine substances which make up the intelligent world:

One – the Good, the highest of the Forms

Mind – offspring of the One, contemplates the One. But because it thinks, it already has diversity. It contains the duality of subject and object. What it thinks about the One, thus gives it form and ideas. Level of the mind is *noesis*, or intuitive knowledge. It thinks about the Forms.

Soul (psyche) – partakes in the mind; the world and its diversity is united by the soul. That which gives life. Soul plays the role of Plato's craftsman. Level of the soul is *dianoia*, the realm of discursive thought. The soul is the *logos* of the Mind, and the organizing principles (*logoi*) are the Forms of the Mind. Humanity is at this lowest of the three divine realms.

Origen saw the One as God the Father, the Mind as God the Son, and the Soul as the spirit. Christian Platonists built on these divine substances and level, but modified it in significant ways.

Thus, one can move from the world to the mind and to the soul, and back from the soul to the mind, to the One. A system of mediation emerges, each level participates in what is above it (Plato's *Symposium*, an ascent of love to this vision of love). It is not merely hierarchical, there is a participatory dimension. Further, there is a reason, a *logos*, which holds the world together. By informing our minds what the logos is, we begin to ascend.

Where are there problems for Xnty? Is there choice? Creation is *ex nihilo*, an act of grace, not an "overflowing"; it is an intentional act of God. Xns are interested in more than how we unify diversity, or how we got here. To Plotinus, we have forgotten the One, and hence are below, whereas for Xnty we are fallen because we have chosen thus (sinned), i.e. though we want to aspire, we also keep choosing away from God. But the idea of seeking, aspiring, to return to the One is compatible with Xnty

Augustine

He's ambitious, bit of a Yuppie (!), he has visions of being an imperial governor. His reading of Cicero's *Hortensius* (a book which has been lost to history) changed his life. To be wise is to be immortal, united with the One. Augustine uses "returning home" language, the eternal, to be wise, to be like God.

Aug - notes & rejects the Platonic view of the One
as resurrection / afterlife of the body

DW Miller

Prolegomenon, by Springsted

2 of 3

✓
ref. to 9/23/98
p. 2 notes on
Plotinus' immortality

He joins the Manichaeans, impressed by their intelligence, and their rational system which explains good and evil (matter is evil, spirit is good; the world is an intersection between the two). It promised wisdom. (Paul says real wisdom is how to follow Christ.)

Augustine comes to realize it ^{was} not so intellectually sophisticated as it purported. Then he encounters the neo-Platonists. They taught him how to see God as immaterial (no body, space, time). Helped him to see the Creator in non-creative terms, that is being present without being spatially present. Evil is not a thing or substance, rather [Manichaeans have an appealing point that evil is not my fault!] it is himself that is the problem. Evil, if it is not simply matter, (with humanity as a complex human being, somehow reflecting the One) is an absence of good, a "privation of some good that ought to be there." Best exemplified in virtue which should be there, but we somehow lose it, fall short. But how do we lose it? We didn't reach for it, it's our fault, we did not unify our desires and aspects of life in any proper order. Heavy sense of personal responsibility in sinful behavior, not blaming it on externals.

echoes of
Platonic
pulling away
from
Good

Augustine's De Trinitas (On the Trinity)

Says the trinitarian persons are not separate or split but are unified. This is very different from Plotinus who saw each as separate subordinate principles. Origen saw the One as God the Father, the Mind as God the Son, and the Soul as the spirit. Yet Augustine does tend to keep the Plotinus' idea of the soul as a separate unembodied concept (in contrast to Paul), steering him to a certain 'inwardness' in his theology, undervaluing the information gained by our senses, which tends to etherialize the Xn life.

The mind as image of God – how do we unite: memory, understanding and will? Answer: just as the Trinity unites three persons.

Images, symbols are part of our world, thus God became incarnate, giving us an image of God, as a way back in, back to God.

Plotinus is strictly intellectual. Xnty becomes practical, too, by giving a way back in, back to unity with God through imitating Christ.

Philosophy, Plotinus' in particular, enabled early Xns to think their own thought more accurately.

Neoplatonism followed Middle Platonism (Plotinus) which greatly expanded his three levels of intelligible realities. Proclus (410-485) in Athens is its major figure. Positively, it rejected the idea of matter as evil but saw it as part of the universal order and therefore good. Evil is more than just an absence of the good; it is a defect or perversion of what is good. Later, Pseudo-Dionysius (c.528) (or Dionysius the Areopagite, the Athenian convert of Paul) wrote in great detail on how we may come to know God, and how the soul may ascend to union with God (great influence still today on Byzantine Xnty)

AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO (354-430 AD)

- Max: his influence on ethics and economics comes from the fact that he develops a basic attitude toward God based on an understanding of the will guided by inner grace and by civilization as an exterior form of grace. [two forms of grace: inner for the will, and outer for civilization.] He draws on the Greeks, the Stoics (particularly Plotinus), but subordinates their philosophies to a theology of love. Life is ordered by love; what one loves determines one's purposes in life, and love of God is the only reliable love. ✓
- Auggie sets up a juxtaposition between pride (the root of all sin) and humility (the virtue most esteemed in the City of God). The humble city is the society of holy men and good angels; the proud city is the society of wicked men and evil angels. The one city began with the love of God; the other had its beginnings in self-love.
- Major division between Augustinian and Aristotelian thinking in medieval period. Aristotle says we attain such measure of God as is possible for us in connection with sensible things. Thus we know God by divine effects. For Augustinians, we rise to knowledge of God only insofar as God illumines the intellect. (Allen, 48) From this we see why Luther and the Reformers lean toward Augustinian thinking, whereas Aquinas and Catholic thinkers lean toward Aristotle's naturalism or natural theology which places emphasis on sensible world.
- The Platonic-Augustinian epistemological tradition goes along with the likeness between knowledge and vision, and the belief that vision is higher than knowledge which can be gained discursively with concepts. Cf. the allegory of The Cave, which describes the ascent of the soul from sense perception (in the cave) to the vision of the Good; moral improvement or purification of the soul is achieved with increasing knowledge of reality. (Allen, 49) This fits with Calvin's emphasis on special revelation as glasses to enable us to see more clearly.
- Rejects Platonist hierarchy of degrees of divinity (the One, the Mind, the Soul). For Xns, the great division is between creator and creature, not between the intelligible and the sensible worlds. (Allen 82-3)
- Platonic Forms become divine ideas or thoughts to Augustine (Allen, 116)
- Look at Charles Taylor read of Augustine:
 - Builds on Plato's emphasis on looking within for the source of wisdom (The motif of "inwardness" – it's rise and development); they each use similar oppositions:
 - Spirit/matter
 - Higher/lower
 - Eternal/temporal
 - Immutable/changing
 - Inner/outer – Auggie makes the step toward inwardness because it is a step toward God; the truth dwells within us and God is truth
 - He modifies Plato in two ways:
 - Radical reflexivity – a radical reflection on the action of self-reflection, getting at the (inner) source to find the Divine
 - The Will – adds the Will because you need the will to do the Good
 - Auggie is proto-Cartesian !

- For Plato, the eye already has the capacity to see; but for Auggie it has lost this capacity; it must be restored by grace. And grace opens the inward man to God and enables us to see that the eye's vaunted power is really God's.
- Descartes give Aug's inwardness a radical twist, situating moral sources within us; and rejects a teleological thinking of any ontic theory of logos.
- Descartes no longer *finds* ideas, rather he *builds* them

Calvin on Augustine:

- **Augustine** also recognizes no independent activity of the human will Rejecting Pelagians, Augustine says: Not only is grace offered by the Lord, which by anyone's free choice may be accepted or rejected; but it is this very grace which forms both choice and will in the heart, so that whatever good works then follow are the fruit and effect of grace; and it has no other will obeying it except the will that has it made. Grace alone brings every good work in us. (Bk2.3.13)
- **Augustine** does not eliminate man's will, but makes it wholly dependent upon grace
- What is free will? – Many definitions: **Augustine**: "a faculty of the reason and the will to choose good with the assistance of grace; evil when grace is absent. (Bk2.2.4)
- **Augustine's doctrine of "free will"** – he does not hesitate to call it "unfree"; without the Spirit, man's will is not free, since he has been laid under by shackling and conquering desires (Bk2.2.8)

City of God (De civitate Dei)

- Major themes: the origin, development, and destiny of the two cities... a notion of a universal religious society... the whole world has as its unique end the constitution of a holy Society, in view of which everything has been made (21)
- The breakdown of the empire is but a small event in world history, viewed from the perspective of eternity (p9)
- The distinction between the two cities is grounded in Augustine's religious psychology. Created spirits are capable of turning toward God with their wills (conversion) or downward toward their bodies (aversion). (p9)
- A. differentiates the two societies through the category of love. There are two distinct commitments of the will – or two loves. Good men (and angels) love God and constitute a special society or city of spirits devoted to divine truth and goodness. Evil men (and angels) spurn God with their wills and love the bodily things of this world. (p9; see also p27).
- The two loves have produced the two cities. (27) he describes and names the cities differently but no matter how they are called the question can be reduced to who is the king of that city: God or the devil? (*Civitas Dei- Civitas Terrena*: heaven-earth; good-evil; peace-death; Abel-Cain; eschatological-temporal;)
- All human society and culture may be seen as the interplay between the competing values of these two loves and of these two cities. The members of the two cities are intermingled in actual human societies on earth (not just Xns in City of God, others stand righteous or good before Christ; and some bad Christians are not in the City of God). (p10)
- Justice is the first condition required for a city (drawing on Cicero's concept that every society should resemble a symphonic concert where different notes and instruments blend together in harmony), and Rome had long lost any sense of justice
- Cicero (Republic, 223) writes, "a people [or a Republic] exists only when the individuals who form it are held together by a partnership in justice." Augustine uses this idealized definition to show that Rome was never a Republic, saying "true justice had never a place in it." (CD,II,21)

- Because of the power of human sin, true justice exists only in the city of God, which exists only in the eternal realm. (CD, 19.4)
- In light of their incapacity for justice, the status of civil institutions is significantly reduced in comparison to their position in the polis-centered paradigm of the Greeks (e.g. Plato, Ari, Cicero). The flaws and injustices of civil society negate its capacity to play the human perfecting role that the classical thinkers assign it. (Ray)
- *Civitas Dei* and *Civitas Terrena* are diametrically opposed to one another. (Ray)
Unclear where/how Rome and a civil society fits into this dualistic set-up.
- Answer: he sees that we can have a "limited peace" in this temporal realm, and that we can at best hope for "well-ordered concord of civic obedience and rule." (CD, XIX,6) which maintains a degree of social order to prevent excessive social chaos.
- Thus, the role of civil society is promote and maintain this earthly peace.
- Theological and ethical link between *civil society*, *earthly peace* and *heavenly peace*
-

Part One: The Pagan Gods & Earthly Happiness

Part Two: The Pagan Gods and Future Happiness

Part Three: The Origin of the Two Cities

- Wogaman – on the "moral will" (p51f) – there is no evil outside the will. God the creator has only created good things. A. rejected any form of theological or metaphysical dualism (thereby rejecting the Manichaeans).
- Evil is a privation of the good. (Confessions) We are attracted to evil because we perceive it to be good, but it is a lesser good, and becomes evil when it becomes a substitute for God.
- An evil will is thus a will directed away from God. (City of God, 14.3)
- Sin is thus error or untruth. Not just simply an intellectual error, but a misdirection of the will. (City of God, 14.3)
- Human pride is the root of all sin. (City of God, 14.3)
- Thus he grounds Xn ethics in the moral will, not in the goodness or evil of objects outside the will. The will is good or bad in accordance with what it worships. (City of God, 14.3)
- Freedom of the Will – God's foreknowledge does not minimize human freedom

ddd

Part Four: The Development of the Two Cities

Part Five: The Ends of the Two Cities

Book XIX: *Philosophy and Christianity on Man's End*

427- all seek the supreme good for its own sake and avoid the supreme evil;

19.4:

✓ 437- the City of God views "eternal life is the supreme good and eternal death is the supreme evil, and that we should live rightly to obtain the one and avoid the other," neither of which can be found in this life.

- ① Wogaman (p.56) – under the heading "Peace and Justice": Augustine writes of *the task of justice* as assuring "that to each is given what belongs to each." (19.4; p.438)
- ① Emphasis on "right order." Within the self, justice is the subordination of the body to the

soul and of the soul to God. Within society, justice is the subordination of the people to authorities and of authorities to God

442- rejects the philosophers claim that the virtues and happiness are sufficient, concluding, "when virtues are genuine virtues – and that is possible only when men believe in God – they make no pretense of protecting their possessors from unhappiness, for that would be a false promise; but they do claim that human life... by the hope of heaven, be made both happy and secure."

19.5:

443- "so much for the philosopher's 'happy life.' What we Christians like better is their teaching that the life of virtue should be a social life."

446- a hierarchy of human associations: the home; the city; and the globe or world community.

451- the supreme good of the City of God is: eternal life, or peace in eternal life, or eternal life in peace. 19.11

456- peace between man and man consists in regulated fellowship. 19.13.

459- he speaks of "ordered obedience guided by faith, under God's eternal law" ✓

✓ 461- "right order here means, first, that he harm no one, and second, that he help whomever he can." (19.14)

465- "the heavenly City, so long as it is wayfaring on earth, not only makes use of earthly peace, but fosters and actively pursues along with other human beings a common platform..." 19.17.

466- "The City of God does not care in the least what kind of dress or social manners a man of faith affects, so long as these involve no offense against divine law. *For it is faith and not fashions that brings us to God.*" [!] 19.19

Book XX: Separation of the Two Cities in the Last Judgement

Takes ample evidence from Old and New Testaments for the reality of a final judgment, in addition to the ongoing judgments of God

Book XXI: End and Punishment of the Earthly City

Makes the case for endless torment of those who will be damned

Book XXII: The Eternal Bliss of the City of God

508- "as for human nature, God made it likewise [like angels] unfallen, but free to fall away." And "if human nature should choose to fall away from God, misery proportionate to the offense was bound to follow."

A discussion of miracles, past and present, there veracity. A discussion of the miracle of the resurrection, and ventures to think that our bodies will be recognizable (and look better than in real life), gender differences will remain.

On the Trinity (De Trinitas)

Has a Platonic inwardness orientation, still holding that the soul is a substance, a standalone entity.

Unity of the divine Trinity. Augustine starts with consciousness of a single mind, and works toward diversity. Augustine used the human mind as his analogue because humans are created in the image of God. We should be able to find trinities in ourselves which are reflections of the Trinity. We have: 1) the human mind as *subject* (the Father); 2) its power to know and love (the Holy Spirit); and 3) ourselves as the *object* of our knowledge and love (the Son). (Allen 103f) A predilection for looking to the inner mind is influenced by Platonism.

Confessions - Influenced by Plato's view that time is created with the universe and Plotinus' notion that time is a mental phenomenon instead of it being primarily the motion of bodies. Bk. 11 is a reply to Manichaeism's questions about time and eternity. Temporal categories are foreign to the divine nature. He breaks with the view that time is cyclical, paving the way for a Christian view of history, giving direction and purpose to human history.

Platonists helped him see that the sensible world depended on a nonsensible reality; helped him overcome the materialist views of the ancient world. Also helped him overcome Manichaeism's duality of good/evil and spirit/material

and meaning. The uses of his sign-theory in theological contexts, such as its application to his views on non-literal, figurative meanings of Scripture or to the Church's sacraments, proved to be highly influential.²¹ Together with his North African contemporary Tyconius, Augustine, especially in the *De doctrina christiana*, develops a hermeneutics of reading Scripture that is profoundly original, with repercussions beyond Biblical interpretation.

5 ETHICS, POLITICAL THEORY, AESTHETICS

Augustine appropriates the eudemonist ethics of ancient philosophy.²² Happiness (*beatitudo*) is a universal human desire (c. *Acad.* 1.5-9; *beata v.* 10, 14; *cit.* 10.1), the goal (*finis*) of human endeavour (*cit.* 19.1): it is the highest good for humans (in one version of this thesis Augustine posits peace, rather than happiness, as the universal goal (*cit.* 19.10-13). In common with the eudemonistic tradition since Aristotle, Augustine investigates what constitutes the well-being of the human being as a rational being (*beata v.* 30-7; *lib. arb.* 2.7, 26; *Gn. c. Man.* 1.31). He does not equate happiness with pleasure or enjoyment, any more than Aristotle or the Stoics do, although he argues that the happiness appropriate to humans, if realized, is accompanied by delight and enjoyment (*doctr. chr.* 1.3-5; *trin.* 11.10). The happiest form of life is living in accordance with reason, whether this consists in the search for truth or its discovery and possession, the state of wisdom (*sapientia*) that reflects divine wisdom (see section 3). The proper end or goal for humans is to 'enjoy God' *qua* truth as an end in itself, and this teleological goal should also determine all our moral choices (*lib. arb.* 2.35-6; *cit.* 8.8; 15.7; c. *Faust.* 22.78).

In one sense, Augustine's account of happiness equates it with a form of knowledge, namely knowledge of what is best and highest: happiness consists in contemplation of stable eternal being, something that endures and, unlike other kinds of possessions, cannot be lost (*beata v.* 11; *lib. arb.* 1.32-4; *vera rel.* 86; *mor.* 1.5). But Augustine qualifies this equation of perfect virtue with knowledge by an insistence that enjoying or 'possessing' God entails doing what God wills, living well, performing virtuous actions. On the one hand, therefore, wisdom is contrasted (Stoically) with folly (*beata v.* 28-9). But Augustine also argues that being virtuous and its contrary are not merely instances of knowledge or ignorance. In this context his concepts of use and enjoyment, and his notion of the will, are crucial.

The Augustinian contrast between use and enjoyment is influenced by rhetorical and philosophical antitheses in Cicero, in particular the 'useful-good' (*utile-honestum*) contrast (*div. qu.* 30). At first sight, however, it is not so much a distinction between kinds of evaluation of temporal things as a contrast between the eternal and the temporal (*lib. arb.* 1.32-4). In order

to enjoy God, who is eternal being, we may use temporal things, as means to an end, in an instrumental way. Augustine includes other human beings among the objects of use, but only by arguing that my use of them is appropriate if it involves love of them 'on God's account' (*propter deum*) (*doctr. chr.* 1.3-4, 20-1).²³ In Augustine's mature thought the category of use is not seen in exclusively instrumental terms, but as a pointer towards the activity of willing, so that even enjoyment becomes a sub-category of use. God's love for us is not 'enjoyment', for that would imply that God needs us for his blessedness. Divine love is rather 'use' in a providential sense (*doctr. chr.* 1.34-5). If there is order and hierarchy among beings, it is an 'order of love' (*ordo amoris*) (*cit.* 15.22). A difficulty with human beings is that, whereas their relations with one another are temporal, they are not just temporal beings. Augustine's vision of the afterlife for those saved is of a heavenly community of God and the saints: thus loving (or enjoying) one another in God becomes a frequent expression in his attempts to escape from problematic consequences of the application of the use-enjoyment category to human relations (*doctr. chr.* 1.36-7; *trin.* 9.13).

Augustine appropriates the Greek philosophical principle that what is especially valuable about truth and knowledge is that they cannot be lost involuntarily (*mor.* 1.5). He understands the principle in terms of love, rather than merely of choice (*trin.* 13.7-11). This is in part because, in thinking about truth, he is thinking about a person, God, and our relation to that person. But the principal reason why he talks of love in this context is to be found in his psychology. It is commonplace in Augustine that what I do depends upon what I love, not merely in the sense of what I value, but above all in the sense that I act in accordance with a settled inclination (*conf.* 13.10; *cit.* 14.7). Acting in accordance with a settled inclination is, for him, acting voluntarily in the strict sense. He finds no place for the Aristotelian view that *enkrateia* (self-mastery) may involve acting voluntarily and morally despite inclining to the wrong things. For Augustine it is not possible to love and value the wrong things and at the same time to choose what is right (*conf.* 8.19-24). Loving the right things is a question of character, not just of rational insight.²⁴

Loving something is a necessary condition of willing it: sometimes Augustine suggests that it is tantamount to willing it. Loving the right things for the right reasons is a pre-condition of acting well. Loving the wrong things, or the right things for the wrong reasons, leads to evil actions. Reacting against the Manichaean belief that evil is a substance or a nature in the universe and in ourselves, and also to some extent reacting against the Plotinian view that metaphysical evil (matter or bodies formed in matter) somehow helps to determine moral evil,²⁵ Augustine argues that whatever exists is, *qua* created by God, good in some degree (*cit.* 19.13). If things ceased to be good in any sense, they would cease to exist. On this principle things are relatively evil to the degree that they lack goodness. Evil is

privation of good, but not in an absolute sense. This is not necessarily a moral distinction: a stone has less goodness than a mind, but I cannot speak of the stone's moral status. Evil in the moral sense is, Augustine suggests, the fact or consequence of willed evil action, chosen by a mind (angelic or human) that remains essentially good, whose nature is good (*civ.* 12.1-9). Persons are, strictly speaking, not evil: actions may be.

If love determines action and is a symptom of character, self-love is the source of sin: more specifically, the source is pride, understood as a refusal to accept subordination to God, to acquiesce in one's place in the hierarchy of beings. In Platonic terms, this is a 'turning away' from God to self-absorption (*sibi placere*), a failure to understand the relationship between God and humans. Adam's fall results from the delusion that he is an autonomous being. His sin is a 'perverse imitation of God' (*conf.* 2.12-14; *civ.* 12.6-8; 14.12-14).

Virtue is defined in terms of order (*doctr.* *chr.* 1.28; *civ.* 15.22). In the early *De beata vita*, Augustine understands the virtues to possess a kind of measure that is without either excess or defect (*beata v.* 30-3). In that work he suggests that the attainment of wisdom by the sage entails possession of the virtues. In his later writings he is less sanguine about the perfectibility of human nature in this life. Life is a continuing struggle with vices; virtue is not a stable, attainable state (*civ.* 19.4). The virtues control but do not extirpate emotions. Augustine recognizes the traditional four cardinal virtues (*mor.* 1.25; *div. qu.* 31). Virtue is a form of love (*mor.* 1.25, 46), primarily of God, but also of other humans. Justice is 'giving God his due' (*civ.* 19.21) as well as loving one's neighbour. The practice of the virtues expresses the inherently social nature of humans: we are naturally members of societies (*civ.* 12.22; 19.12; *ep.* 130.13). Augustine subscribes to the natural law theory (*div. qu.* 53; *spir. et litt.* 48). Our awareness of the natural law derives from self-love, or the instinct for self-preservation, and it extends (as does the Stoic concept from which it derives) to a realization of the need for justly regulated relations with others (*civ.* 19.4; *doctr.* *chr.* 1.27). Primarily, this realization is a form of the Golden Rule⁶ in its negative version: 'Do not do to others what you would not have others do to you' (*ep.* 157.15; *en.* *Ps.* 57.1; *Io. ev.* *tr.* 49.12). Augustine gives the natural, or, as he often calls it, eternal law the status of a Platonic Form inasmuch as he says of it, as he says of the Forms, that it is 'stamped on our minds' (*lib. arb.* 1.50-1; *trin.* 14.21; *ser.* 81.2). Strictly speaking, the laws of human societies should be framed in accordance with divine eternal law (*vera rel.* 58), but it is political authority, rather than strict conformity to natural law, that gives validity to positive law (*ep.* 153.16; *civ.* 19.14). Only those human laws that are explicit contraventions of divine commands may be disobeyed, and Augustine's understanding of what constitutes divine commands is specific: they are commands directly revealed in Scripture, such as the prohibition of idolatry (*doctr.* *chr.* 2.40, 58; *civ.* 19.17; *ser.* 62.13). Augustine is otherwise reluctant to assert as a principle that

individuals may decide for themselves whether an individual temporal law is just or unjust, even if promulgated by an unjust ruler or without reference to the natural law. One obvious exception is a law that might sanction something contrary to nature (Augustine's example is sodomy (*conf.* 3.15-16)). Other laws (for example, about monogamy or polygamy) merely reflect the customs of different societies (*conf.* 3.12-13; *c. Faust.* 22.47). Hence there is scope for great differences in the laws of different societies.²⁷

The peace which is the highest good is also the proper aim of human societies. They should aspire to practise justice, to be stable, to be equitable in their dealings.²⁸ In practice, this is often only realized by coercion, punitive measures, and harsh exercise of authority: Augustine finds this appropriate to our fallen human nature, vitiated as it is by original sin. Controlling humans driven by greed, pride, ambition, and lust calls for a rule of law that, at best, contains vestiges or traces of authentic justice (*Simpl.* 1.2.16; *trin.* 14.22). Certain features of his society – private property and slavery, for instance – Augustine regards as consequences of the Fall, not, strictly speaking, natural, at least not to our pristine created selves (*civ.* 19.15-16; *Io. ev. tr.* 6.25-6). In general, Augustine insists that it is the proper use of wealth and possessions that counts. He proffers no moral critique of the economic or social institutions of his society. Misuse of wealth is wrongful possession of it, not in the legal sense (unless the misuse is also criminal), but in the moral sense that, in strict justice, the individual has forfeited his right to a material good (*ep.* 153.26; *ser.* 113.4; *en. Ps.* 131.25). Renunciation of property and wealth is part of the ascetic ideal, but it is the desire for unnecessary wealth, rather than the possession of wealth, that is immoral. Curbing desires is a central function of political authority, and it often has to take the form of merely restricting the harm that those who misuse the world's goods would do. Augustine takes a sanguine view of government, which will not be required in the ideal state of heaven, where the tranquillity of order that is only realized by the rule of law in earthly societies (and only infrequently) will be realized spontaneously by the community of saints (*civ.* 19.11, 13-14; 22.30).²⁹

One social institution which Augustine defends is matrimony. His defence argues that it is not merely for the procreation of children but also to provide fellowship for the partners (*ls. coniug.* 3). But a state of sexual abstinence is preferable. Augustine's one argument for this view revolves around his understanding of sexual arousal. He has many grounds for championing abstinence as the supreme form of ascetic renunciation,³⁰ but they usually reflect his attitude to sensuality in general and control of emotions in particular. The argument concerning sexual arousal is that it is involuntary, not subject to the will or consent (*civ.* 14.16, 24; *ep.* 184A.3). It seems to be an exception to the rule that other bodily organs can be activated by the will, with or without emotional stimulus, indeed require some kind of willing in order to operate. But sexual arousal happens without the will's

consent, and neither can it be aroused at will. Even when desire has fired the mind after arousal (and so some kind of willing has occurred), the sex organs may fail to be responsive. Augustine considers this to be a consequence of original sin, and can envisage a pre-lapsarian form of sexual activity that is controlled by the will. His Pelagian adversary Julian of Eclanum argues that sexual desire is not merely necessary for copulation but also natural and in itself morally neutral (c. *Iul. imp.* 1.70-1; 3.209). But why are anarchic genitals so bad? What distinguishes sexual arousal from, say, sneezing or coughing?

Augustine seems to argue that what distinguishes it is its power over both body and mind: it overwhelms a person emotionally, physically, and mentally. This he finds sinister. There is, by implication, no emotion which cannot be brought under the control of reason, but sexual arousal is impervious to reason and to will (*civ.* 14.16). Augustine's other arguments – such as the sense of shame attending sexual desire and acts – cannot explain why sex is tainted. But he finds that sexual arousal occurs even in the dreams of those who, like him, have devoted themselves to a life of continence, and that in dreams he seems to consent to sexual acts that his waking self repudiates. He argues that this cannot involve any moral responsibility, but feels that such dreams are a symptom of his imperfect moral status, as well as being yet another indication that the sex instinct is beyond our conscious control (*conf.* 10. 41-2; *Gn. litt.* 12.15-31).³¹

In several areas of ethics where Augustine's ideas are not necessarily original he exerted, because of his authority and the wide dissemination of his views, a considerable influence. This is the case with what he says about the ethics of warfare, which does not advance much beyond Cicero (*civ.* 1.21; 4.15; 19.7; *ep.* 189.6; 229.2; c. *Faust.* 22.75),³² or his views about suicide, which contain the arguments that we do not dispose of our lives (a Platonic argument) and that killing oneself is a kind of cowardice and of despair, the triumph of emotion over reason (*civ.* 1.17-27; *ser.* 353.8).³³

Augustine's Platonism makes him equate the beautiful with the good. The God whom we love is the supreme beauty which we desire (*conf.* 7.7; 10.8, 38; *sol.* 1.22; *trim.* 1.31; *civ.* 8.6, 11.10; *ser.* 241.2; *en. Ps.* 44.3). Beauty consists of a numerically founded form or relation whose sensible manifestation is a reflection of a higher, immutable divine 'reason'. Beauty's structure is rational and accessible to the judging mind (*ord.* 1.18, 2.33-4; *mus.* 6.30, 38; *Gn. litt.* 3.16.25). But the formal beauty of the arts is to be transcended no less than natural beauty, and all perceptible beauty is an 'admonition' to mind to ascend to a spiritual plane where intelligible beauty is one with truth and wisdom (*conf.* 7.23; 10.9; *vera rel.* 101). In his creation account, Augustine uses the craftsman-analogy: God is the true artist and the universe is an artefact whose perfection is both numerical and hierarchical (*civ.* 11.18, 21-2; 12.24-5; *Gn. c. Man.* 1.25). If we could perceive the whole, we would realize that evil in the universe does not detract from its overall

goodness, and that the presence of antitheses and contraries in it may enhance its beauty (*ord.* 1.18; *conf.* 7.18; *civ.* 11.18, 22; 12.4). Augustine recognizes the temptations inherent in aesthetic pleasure, as in any pleasure. He perceives, for example, that piety and fervour can be nourished by church music, but that the senses may sometimes usurp the place of reason when we delight in song (*conf.* 10.49-50). Once more, it is a question of proper use of a lesser good. To delight in the beauty of the universe for its own sake, even if the delight is intellectual rather than sensual, is to confuse reflected goodness and beauty with the truly and perfectly good and beautiful. This would be a failure to know the Good and to love God. It would also, Augustine believes, leave us dissatisfied, our potential for the perfecting of our natures unrealized.³⁴

6 THE WILL

Augustine's concept of the will³⁵ and defence of free will rest on the paradox that God determines our wills when we will the good, but that such willing is nonetheless free choice, for which we are responsible. This applies as much to Adam before the Fall as to humanity's postlapsarian state. Divine help for Adam in paradise was a necessary, but not sufficient condition of his free choice of the good, and neither was freedom of choice sufficient. Only divine grace and human free choice together are sufficient for attaining the good (*civ.* 14.26; *corrupt.* 28-34). Augustine argues, puzzlingly, that Adam, and all created beings, have a tendency to choose evil rather than good because they are created out of nothing and are possessed of an ontological weakness that does not entail their sinning but makes it possible that they will choose evil (*civ.* 12.6; 14.13; c. *Iul. imp.* 5.3).

In an early work, the *De libero arbitrio*, Augustine describes the faculty of free will as a middle good whose activity is necessary to virtue: the neutral will can be used either rightly or wrongly, it is morally indifferent (*lib. arb.* 2.50-3). But as his thought develops, Augustine argues for the concept of a will that is morally determined, that is good or evil depending upon the value of what is willed. This is in part a reaction against Pelagian views. Pelagius describes human choice as a 'power to take either side', neither good nor evil *per se*: 'in the middle'. Augustine denies that the same will can choose good and evil. Will is either good or evil, or, more accurately, the power of free choice (*liberum arbitrium*) of the will (*voluntas*) may be exercised in a good or an evil way (*lib. arb.* 2.1). The Pelagians had a strong case when they argued that Augustine's views in *De libero arbitrio* were akin to theirs (*retr.* 1.9; *conf.* 8.19-21; *pecc. mer.* 2.18-30; *spir. et lit.* 58; *gr. et pecc. or.* 1.19-21).

Will for Augustine is a mental power or capacity, like memory, but because it is morally qualified it reflects a person's moral standing in a way that memory cannot. As well as referring to a good or bad will in the singular,

Augustine talks of two or more wills in us, where there is moral conflict: in this latter case, our wills are the range of possible courses of action open to us (*lib. arb.* 2.51; *conf.* 8.19–21; *gr. et lib. arb.* 4).

If God determines my good will, how can I be free? Augustine believes that the fact that God has foreknowledge of my will does not determine that will, for God's knowledge (strictly speaking, not foreknowledge) is timeless eternal (*Simpl.* 2.22; *ciu.* 5.9; 11.21; *praed. sanct.* 19). Divine omniscience is compatible with free choice of the will. Yet predestination to salvation is actively caused by God. Augustine argues that this does not make us passive recipients of divine grace. The notion of 'compulsion of the will' is to him an absurd one (*1.1.101*; *c. ep. Pel.* 2.9–12). Willing entails the power to do X through, and only through, the means of willing X. Augustine's psychology is based upon the belief (which he derives from analysis of our behaviour) in the centrality of concentration or attention (*intentio*) in all mental processes. The mind is activated by the will, not in the sense of one faculty or 'part of the soul' affecting another, but inasmuch as we cannot perceive, or imagine, or remember without concentrating or paying attention or willing to do so. Thus grace may only become operative in humans when the will is attracted to the good. For the will is always goal-directed, and will entails assent. Willing is a form of action, not a reaction to external stimuli (*gr. et lib. arb.* 32; *c. ep. Pel.* 1.5, 27). If divine grace is irresistible, this does not entail that grace compels us. People are 'acted upon that they may act' (*corrupt.* 4). It is seems impossible to argue that this is not determinism. What Augustine is stressing is that consent is necessary to the *modus operandi* of the will's reception of grace.

Augustine's arguments against Pelagius' description of human choice as 'a power to take either side' is based upon the observation that it posits the same cause (the indifferent will) of opposite effects (*gr. et pecc. or.* 1.19–21). Augustine appears here to reject the so-called 'freedom of indifference' of the will. His position seems to be closer to freedom of spontaneity, where absence of force or compulsion, rather than absence of external causation, is characteristic. Will is not self-determining, yet humans are not accurately to be described as being instruments of God's will. Thus the Stoic example of the dog tied to, and dragged by, the cart (*SVF* II 975 [7.2]) cannot apply to Augustine's understanding of spontaneity. Freedom is not merely acquiescence in God's activity, but rather the exercise of a human faculty that involves both consent and power to act, or to initiate action. Both in his account of Adam's freedom in paradise and in his early version of his free-will theory in *De libero arbitrio* Augustine subscribes to the liberty of indifference account; but it is not applicable to fallen humanity. However, the fallen human being possesses both the ability and, it may be, the opportunity, to act otherwise, even though that ability is not, in fact, exercised when the will is determined by the good. Exercising the ability to commit sin is not, of course, an exercise of freedom of the will for the mature

Augustine. Rather, it is an instance of the enslavement of the will to evil, from which only divine grace can liberate it. If freedom to sin is a form of slavery, then willing and obedient slavery to the will of God is true freedom (*ench.* 30). On the other hand, sin is the price of having free will, and having free will is a necessary condition of acting rightly. Sin is the price of freedom, because freedom entails absence of compulsion. This is Augustine's version of the free will defence (*ench.* 27; *lib. arb.* 2.1–3).³⁵ It reveals why defence of free choice of the will seems to be so important to Augustine. Heavenly rewards (and hellish punishments) make no sense if they are not a consequence of acting rightly (or wrongly), even if God is the author of our virtuous actions. The argument does not explain satisfactorily why God tolerates sin. Augustine's characteristic strategy here is to concede that nothing happens 'apart from God's will', even those things, like sin, that happen 'against God's will' (*ench.* 100). God lets us sin, but does not cause us to do so. But it is difficult, on these premises, to avoid the consequence that God is responsible for sin, in the sense that he is responsible for states of affairs brought about voluntarily, if not intentionally, by him. The distinction between causing and permitting seems impossible to maintain.³⁷

God's grace precedes (in Augustine's terminology) acts of the free will. God makes good decisions possible, but also causes them, for grace is irresistible. Preventive grace is more than merely enabling, nor is it a form of co-operation between God and humans. Rather it is operative. Again, the question arises: can a decision caused by God be free? Augustine's answer is the one discussed above. God causes the reception of his gifts by the mechanism of human consent. But since God's will is never thwarted, it is as true to say that what happens as a consequence of divine will happens by necessity, as it is to maintain that human realization of good behaviour is an instance of human freedom. 'God cannot will in vain anything that he has willed' (*ench.* 103), and the human being whom God wills to save cannot be damned. But neither will such a human being be saved against her will.

7 SOUL

Augustine's concept of soul as an immaterial, naturally good, active, inextended, and indivisible substance owes much to his Neoplatonist readings. It is also likely that Porphyry is a major source of his knowledge of the contents of Plato's *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*, and *Timaeus*. Scripture and the Christian tradition provide Augustine less with a concept of soul's nature than with texts requiring exegetical elucidation by means of Platonic psychology, and attempts at philosophical exegesis which he rejects, such as Tertullian's corporealist theories and Origen's arguments for pre-existence, embodiment as punishment for sin, and reincarnation.³⁸

Chapter Four

The Catholic Theological Traditions

Believers took Christ as their model for life. They learned about him through the Scriptures and through traditions handed down in the church. As the faith began to spread throughout the Mediterranean world — Greece, Rome, Spain, North Africa — and eventually into Northern Europe, the Slavic lands, and the Americas, believers encountered subtle philosophies based on profound forms of reason and reflecting the experience of high cultures.

Believers lived and worked at the intersection of the church and a civilization that was formed by these philosophies and the pagan cultures they expressed. They faced many practical issues of what to think and do, of how to live their lives and order the common life. They sought an integrated vision that would bring together Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience so that they could live “in but not of the world” — as many today are trying to do in the newer churches of Asia and Africa, and now again in the West in the face of neo-paganism.

The great teachers and preachers of theological ethics, as it developed between the ancient world and the modern one, were not of one mind about economic matters. As in science, medicine, and the arts, a good number of faltering steps were taken, but only some opened up wider and deeper possibilities for an economic life that was increasingly cosmopolitan while providing spiritual and moral guidance to persons, local communities, and whole societies.

Theological ethicists focused on one or another of the dimensions of ethics as they are found in Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience. Some accented the deontological dimensions, while others emphasized the teleological or ethological dimensions. Some showed acute understandings

of personal ethics, but very little understanding of how production and distribution work. Some presumed that production would always be plentiful because God endowed nature with plenty, and thus they emphasized an ethic of sharing, equitable distribution, or compassion for the poor. And just as in philosophy, political theory, or judicial practice, some great teachers were conservative and cautious, while others were liberal and willing to take risks in life and thought. In the economy of God, and in the formation of business ethics, all of these made contributions, though they did not all agree.

In the richness of these variations, it is important to see the major theological and ethical teachings that lay behind root attitudes toward economic life. These teachings made new opportunities possible in addition to purely traditional practices, and they constrained destructive practices and attitudes that could have ripped souls and civilizations to shreds.

In this chapter, we find a series of brief, representative readings from the early and medieval periods of the church's teachings. These readings reveal an attempt to integrate biblical and philosophical motifs; they represent major alternative attitudes toward wealth, poverty, and work; and they express a variety of understandings of the social context of economic life. Although some of the styles will seem strange at first to readers not familiar with normative theological discourse, these readings deal with major issues that have been debated over the centuries and that are still alive today.

Clement of Alexandria

Some early Christian teachers feared the temptation of wealth as they saw it among the elites of the ancient cities. After all, many of the very wealthy people of this period were much given to ostentatious displays of wealth and massive banquets, which not infrequently led to open debauchery, on the holidays of the pagan gods. Every person of means had to decide whether or not to become a part of this social swirl.

Many found other styles of life through learning and faith, but the inclination to condemn all aspects of culture was pronounced. Some saw corruption everywhere in civilization and felt compelled to seek God and to fight the battles against temptation in the still isolation of the desert. Early forms of Christian asceticism, the disciplined control of material and bodily existence for the sake of spiritual and moral well-being, can be found here. We shall see later in this chapter how that impulse made a significant if unintended contribution to economic history.

Most believers neither went to banquets nor retreated to the desert. Most felt that God wanted them to live righteously, but in the midst of culture. The question was how? For all the benefits of civilization, family and sexuality, politics and power, culture and art, and especially wealth and goods could easily become all-consuming; they could become idols in which one put one's ultimate trust. This, then, was a theological matter. Further, they could blind one to the harshness in one's own soul or group or to the distress of the needy and lonely. Thus, this was also a moral matter. The debates over how Christians should live and participate in society were intense, and they deeply influenced subsequent basic attitudes toward material possessions.

Clement, a Greek by origin who became a

leader among Egyptian Christians in Alexandria, wrote several treatises on the issue in the century after the Gospels were written. As the head of a school, he linked his understanding of the Bible with motifs from Stoic ethics to form a major wing of Christian opinion in that time. He made a distinction between the ownership and the use of property: ownership was God's; use was ours. Further, against those who took Paul's warning to Timothy that "the love of money is the root of all evil" as a demand to repudiate all wealth, Clement argued that it is theologically and ethically valid to hold the goods of the earth, *provided that* the use of those goods is for the well-being of the community, and *provided that* one becomes neither gluttonous nor idolatrous about material things. In fact, Clement believed that poverty prevents the soul from seeking God, for the body constantly demands its attention.

In the passage that follows, Clement treats one of the most difficult and widely quoted biblical texts on these questions, the story of the rich young ruler, a story told in the New Testament, with slight variations, by Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

Cyprian

In all of the world religions, giving is seen as better than getting; sacrifice is honored, while acquisitiveness is suspect; liberality is praised, while possessiveness is condemned. Gifts, donations, and charity are intrinsic to the religious spirit. The motivations for giving may vary from religion to religion — some may give to affirm detachment from material things, some to make the “divine forces” benevolent, some to fulfill required commands, and some to display the magnanimity of the donor; but the approval of generosity as opposed to greed is universal.

In Christian thought the urge to give is understood to be rooted less in terms of the duty of the believer or the winning of spiritual merit or the display of altruism than in a response of gratitude for the gifts that God has given to humanity. This core motivation is related to a double need: the need for the self to express the love of God, which purifies the soul, and the need of a neighbor, whom we are to love.

Few of the early Christians accented these motifs as clearly as Cyprian. He was a church leader in Carthage, a thriving city in North Africa, who was driven from his post during a political persecution of Christians. During his exile, he kept the church together by means of smuggled letters and booklets of instruction, in which he used reason to argue from Scripture.

When he finally was allowed to return to his position as bishop, he proved to be one of the most effective leaders of the generation after Clement. He developed a number of guidelines for the conduct of worship and the organization of the church; but we remember him primarily as one who established decisive principles of sharing, stewardship, and charity. These themes have become a part of what is expected of the responsible

person in modern societies. He took up these questions in the reading that follows by discussing “alms,” an early practice of relief, aid, and religious offering.

In addition to a number of concerns which he shares with Clement about the effects of giving on the heart (or “bowels,” which ancient peoples thought was the seat of the soul) of the giver, Cyprian is more clearly concerned about the effects that giving has on the recipients. He wanted to see the practical alleviation of distress among the needy. Implicit in this accent is the notion that living in want is not how God intends life to be, that social and political orders in which people have great need are contrary to God’s will, and that the responsible person will undertake direct and personal concrete “works” to overcome that distortion — even though the capacity of the citizenry to influence public policy was severely limited at that time, and the Christians were a persecuted minority in any case.

Benedict

The suspicion of Mammon in some parts of the Bible was reinforced over time by the teachings of some philosophers and by various forms of spirituality that had a contempt for material and historical reality. These emphases encouraged a tradition of hermits, those who abandoned civilization, with all its necessary compromises, for a life of spiritual struggle for holiness and against destructive forces within and without. Some ascetics had disciples or devoted admirers; many lived alone in the desert; but their witness to a kind of meaning other than that found in secular society had a great impact on Christian believers, just as the sadhus of India, the forest monks of Thailand, the Taoist sages of China, and the Sufis of the Middle East have had elsewhere.

But the reclusive impulse was not the only impulse within Christianity. Its intense focus on the individual soul is matched by a drive toward fellowship. And for all Christianity's accent on a world-transcending spirituality, this faith places an equally strong emphasis on a world-affirming sense of incarnation. The spiritual realm is made present to humans in and through the earthly and temporal world.

Such motifs have combined in numerous ways in Christian history. One of the most significant for economic life is the formation of distinctive communities of committed people who separate themselves from the institutions of ordinary life. The first such stable community was formed by Pachomius in North Africa in the early 300s. A century later Augustine himself founded an order. But it was another hundred years before Benedict wrote his "Rule" for the monastic community. Benedict's Rule not only summarized much that went before but also gave monasticism in the West a distinctive stamp. He connected spirituality with

the shared, planned, and disciplined modes of production as demands of the gospel, so that work became a form of prayer and technology (the tools of the day) became instruments of sacramental importance.

Some scholars have argued that without the monastic movement the church and its faith could easily have been swallowed into the feudal family or the imperial culture, depending on whoever supported it financially. But the monastic movement gave the church a base independent of family life (which was the basis of most economic production) and of politics (which was the basis of most power and prestige). In this context, the vows of "poverty, chastity, and obedience" (obedience to the abbot, and hence not to either the head of the family or the head of the regime) represented not only a particular view of Scripture and the demands of faith but also the formation of a disciplined, cooperative, productive community outside traditional structures of authority. This movement became the progenitor of numerous church reforms. Its influence can also be traced to later forms of Christian socialism, various countercultural communes, several radical and independent sects, and the independent corporation. It was a quiet but very consequential revolution brought about by communal spiritual discipline — a revolution whose effects were felt in many directions.

The Rule of Saint Benedict

Benedict

Listen carefully, my son, to the master's instructions, and attend to them with the ear of your heart. This is advice from a father who loves you; welcome it, and faithfully put it into practice. The labor of obedience will bring you back to him from whom you had drifted through the sloth of disobedience. This message of mine is for you, then, if you are ready to give up your own will, once and for all, and armed with the strong and noble weapons of obedience to do battle for the true King, Christ the Lord. . . .

Seeking his workman in a multitude of people, the Lord calls out to him and lifts his voice again: *Is there anyone here who yearns for life and desires to see good days?* (Ps 33[34]:13). If you hear this and your answer is "I do," God then directs these words to you: *If you desire true and eternal life, keep your tongue free from vicious talk and your lips from all deceit; turn away from evil and do good; let peace be your quest and aim* (Ps 33[34]:14-15). Once you have done this, *my eyes will be upon you and my ears will listen for your prayers; and even before you ask me, I will say to you: Here I am* (Isa 58:9). What, dear brothers, is more delightful than this voice of the Lord calling to us? See how the Lord in his love shows us the way of life. Clothed then with faith and the performance of good works, let us set out on this way, with the Gospel for our guide, that we may deserve to see *him who has called us to his kingdom* (1 Thess 2:12). If we wish to dwell in the tent of this kingdom, we will

never arrive unless we run there by doing good deeds. . . .

Therefore we intend to establish a school for the Lord's service. In drawing up its regulations, we hope to set down nothing harsh, nothing burdensome. The good of all concerned, however, may prompt us to a little strictness in order to amend faults and to safeguard love. Do not be daunted immediately by fear and run away from the road that leads to salvation. It is bound to be narrow at the outset. But as we progress in this way of life and in faith, we shall run on the path of God's commandments, our hearts overflowing with the inexpressible delight of love. . . .

[Chapters Regarding the Economic Life]

[T]here should be chosen from the community someone who is wise, mature in conduct, temperate, not an excessive eater, not proud, excitable, offensive, dilatory or wasteful, but God-fearing, and like a father to the whole community. He will take care of everything, but will do nothing without an order from the abbot. Let him keep to his orders.

He should not annoy the brothers. If any brother happens to make an unreasonable demand of him, he should not reject him with disdain and cause him distress, but reasonably and humbly deny the improper request. Let him keep watch over his own soul, ever mindful of that saying of the Apostle: *He who serves well secures a good standing for himself* (1 Tim 3:13). He must show every care and concern for the sick, children, guests and the poor, knowing for certain that he will be held accountable for all of them on the day of judgment. He will regard all utensils and goods of the monastery as sacred vessels of the altar, aware that nothing is to be neglected. He should not be prone to greed, nor be wasteful and extravagant with the goods of the monastery, but should do everything with moderation and according to the abbot's orders.

Above all, let him be humble. If goods are not available to meet a request, he will offer a kind word in reply, for it is written: *A kind word is better than the best gift* (Sir 18:17). He should take care of all that the abbot entrusts to him, and not presume to do what the abbot has forbidden. He will

From *The Rule of St. Benedict*, abridged ed. in English and Latin, with notes and commentary by T. Fry, O.S.B. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1981), pp. 5, 9, 13, 75, 77, 79.

provide the brothers their allotted amount of food without any pride or delay, lest they be led astray. For he must remember what the Scripture says that person deserves *who leads one of the little ones astray* (Matt 18:6).

If the community is rather large, he should be given helpers, that with their assistance he may calmly perform the duties of his office. Necessary items are to be requested and given at the proper times, so that no one may be disquieted or distressed in the house of God.

Chapter 32. The Tools and Goods of the Monastery

The goods of the monastery, that is, its tools, clothing or anything else, should be entrusted to brothers whom the abbot appoints and in whose manner of life he has confidence. He will, as he sees fit, issue to them the various articles to be cared for and collected after use. The abbot will maintain a list of these, so that when the brothers succeed one another in their assigned tasks, he may be aware of what he hands out and what he receives back.

Whoever fails to keep the things belonging to the monastery clean or treats them carelessly should be reproved. If he does not amend, let him be subjected to the discipline of the rule.

Chapter 33. Monks and Private Ownership

Above all, this evil practice must be uprooted and removed from the monastery. We mean that without an order from the abbot, no one may presume to give, receive or retain anything as his own, nothing at all — not a book, writing tablets or stylus — in short, not a single item, especially since monks may not have the free disposal even of their own bodies and wills. For their needs, they are to look to the father of the monastery, and are not allowed anything which the abbot has not given or permitted. *All things should be the common possession of all*, as it is written, *so that no one presumes to call anything his own* (Acts 4:32).

But if anyone is caught indulging in this most evil practice, he should be warned a first and a

second time. If he does not amend, let him be subjected to punishment.

Chapter 34. Distribution of Goods According to Need

It is written: *Distribution was made to each one as he had need* (Acts 4:35). By this we do not imply that there should be favoritism — God forbid — but rather consideration for weaknesses. Whoever needs less should thank God and not be distressed, but whoever needs more should feel humble because of his weakness, not self-important because of the kindness shown him. In this way all the members will be at peace. . . .

Augustine

No single intellectual or spiritual leader of the first ten centuries after the New Testament was written has had as much influence on the West as the North African thinker and pastor, Augustine. Historians of ideas trace root notions behind modern psychology to him; he wedded classical political philosophy to a biblical understanding of history to form basic paradigms of the West's social and legal theory; he established a monastic movement; he was considered the best theological authority by the greatest Roman Catholic thinkers; and Protestant thought is dependent on his work. Today, a number of critics of Christianity and Western culture believe that the West will not be reformed in its basic directions until the ideas of Augustine are refuted or rejected.

He wrote relatively little specifically on economics and business, although one can find many passages that echo Clement or Cyprian, plus fragments where business is seen as redemptive. For example, he wrote this in a sermon on "The Love of Neighbor":

Man . . . is a rational soul with a mortal and earthly body in its service. Therefore he who loves his neighbor does good partly to the man's body, and partly to his soul. What benefits the body is called medicine; what benefits the soul, discipline. Medicine here includes everything that either preserves or restores bodily health. It includes, therefore, not only what belongs to the art of medical men, properly so called, but also food and drink, clothing and shelter, and every means of covering and protection to guard our bodies against injuries and mishaps. For hunger and thirst, and cold and heat . . . produce loss of that health which is the point to be considered. Hence those who . . . wisely supply all the things required

for warding off these evils and distresses are called compassionate. . . .

Augustine's importance for ethics and economics, however, comes more from the fact that he develops a basic attitude toward God based on an understanding of the will guided by inner grace and by civilization as an exterior form of grace. Within this general framework, he shows the pertinence of biblical and theological concepts to every human activity. He drew on the Greeks, the Stoics, and especially Plotinus, but he subordinated their philosophies to a theology of love. From the standpoint of ordinary experience, life is ordered by love: what one loves determines one's purposes in life. But ultimately, the love of God is the only reliable love, for it alone accords with the ultimate purposes, laws, and grace of existence beyond the reality of sin.

The following selections are drawn from his famous work, *The City of God*, which he composed during the first quarter of the fifth century. In them, he treats the fundamental issues of good and evil and how they are to be understood in the heart, in the world, and in religion.

2 forms of
grace
inner - w. v.
outer - civ. l.

On Good and Evil

Augustine

"Whether Positive Evil Exists"

The explanation of the goodness of creation is the goodness of God. It is a reasonable and sufficient explanation whether considered in the light of philosophy or of faith. It puts an end to all controversies concerning the origin of the world. . . .

Thus does Divine Providence teach us not to be foolish in finding fault with things but, rather, to be diligent in finding out their usefulness or, if our mind and will should fail us in the search, then to believe that there is some hidden use still to be discovered, as in so many other cases, only with great difficulty. This effort needed to discover hidden usefulness either helps our humility or hits our pride, since absolutely no natural reality is evil and the only meaning of the word "evil" is the privation of good. . . .

"The Source of Ethical Failings"

✓ This I know, that the nature of God can never and nowhere be deficient in anything, while things made out of nothing can be deficient. In regard to these latter, the more they have of being and the more good things they do or make — for then they are doing or making something positive — the more their causes are efficient; but in so far as they fail or are defective and, in that sense, "do evil" — if a "defect" can be "done" — then their causes are "deficient." I know, further, that when

Augustine, *The City of God*, trans. D. B. Zema and G. G. Walsh, in *Fathers of the Church*, vol. 8 (New York: Catholic University Press, 1950), selections from bks. 11, 12, 14, and 19.

a will "is made" evil, what happens would not have happened if the will had not wanted it to happen. That is why the punishment which follows is just, since the defection was not necessary but voluntary. The will does not fall "into sin"; it falls "sinfully." Defects are not mere relations to natures that are evil; they are evil in themselves because, contrary to the order of natures, there is a defection from Being that is supreme to some lesser being.

Thus, greed is not a defect in the gold that is desired but in the man who loves it perversely by falling from justice which he ought to esteem as incomparably superior to gold; nor is lust a defect in bodies which are beautiful and pleasing: it is a sin in the soul of the one who loves corporeal pleasures perversely, that is, by abandoning that temperance which joins us in spiritual and unblemishable union with realities far more beautiful and pleasing; nor is boastfulness a blemish in words of praise: it is a failing in the soul of one who is so perversely in love with other peoples' applause that he despises the voice of his own conscience; nor is pride a vice in the one who delegates power, still less a flaw in the power itself: it is a passion in the soul of the one who loves his own power so perversely as to condemn the authority of one who is still more powerful.

In a word, anyone who loves perversely the good of any nature whatsoever and even, perhaps, acquires this good makes himself bad by gaining something good and sad by losing something better. . . .

"Human Responsibility in Decision Making"

However, our main point is that, from the fact that to God the order of all causes is certain, there is no logical deduction that there is no power in the choice of our will. The fact is that our choices fall within the order of the causes which is known for certain to God and is contained in His foreknowledge — for, human choices are the causes of human acts. It follows that He who foreknew the causes of all things could not be unaware that our choices were among those causes which were foreknown as the causes of our acts.

In this matter it is easy enough to refute Cicero

by his own admission, namely, that nothing happens without a preceding efficient cause. It does not help him to admit that nothing happens without a cause and then to argue that not every cause is fated, since some causes are either fortuitous or natural or voluntary. He admits that nothing happens without a preceding cause; that is enough to refute him.

Thus, God is the Cause of all things — a cause that makes but is not made. Other causes make, but they are themselves made — for example, all created spirits and, especially, rational spirits. Material causes which are rather passive than active are not to be included among efficient causes, for their power is limited to what the wills of spirits work through them.

It does not follow, therefore, that the order of causes, known for certain thought it is in the fore-knowing mind of God, brings it about that there is no power in our will, since our choices themselves have an important place in the order of causes.

Our conclusion is that our wills have power to do all what God wanted them to do and foresaw they could do. Their power such as it is, is a real power. What they are to do they themselves will most certainly do, because God foresaw both that they could do it and that they would do it and His knowledge cannot be mistaken. . . .

"On Evil"

Should anyone say that the cause of vices and evil habits lies in the flesh because it is only when the soul is influenced by the flesh that it lives then in such a manner, he cannot have sufficiently considered the entire nature of man. . . .

It is an error to suppose that all the evils of the soul proceed from the body. . . . On the contrary, the first bad will, which was present in man before any of his bad deeds, was rather a falling away from the work of God into man's own works than a positive work itself; in fact, a fall into bad works, since they were "according to man" and not "according to God." Thus, this bad will or, what is the same, man in so far as his will is bad is like a bad tree which brings forth these bad works like bad fruit.

A bad will, however, contrary as it is to nature

and not according to nature, since it is a defect in nature, still belongs to the nature of which it is a defect, since it has no existence apart from this nature. This nature, of course, is one that God has created out of nothing, and not out of Himself, as was the case when He begot the Word through whom all things have been made. Though God has fashioned man from the dust of the earth, that same dust, like all earthly matter, has been made out of nothing. And it was a soul made out of nothing which God united to the body when man was created.

In the long run, however, the good triumphs over the evil. It is true, of course, that the Creator permits evil, to prove to what good purpose His providence and justice can use even evil. Nevertheless, while good can exist without any defect, as in the true and supreme God Himself, and even in the whole of that visible and invisible creation, high in the heavens above this gloomy atmosphere, evil cannot exist without good, since the natures to which the defects belong, in as much as they are natures, are good. Moreover, we cannot remove evil by the destruction of the nature or any part of it, to which the damage has been done. We can only cure a disease or repair the damage by restoring the nature to health or wholeness. . . .

"On Power and Authority"

Our first parents only fell openly into the sin of disobedience because, secretly, they had begun to be guilty. Actually, their bad deed could not have been done had not bad will preceded it; what is more, the root of their bad will was nothing else than pride. For, "pride is the beginning of all sin." And what is pride but an appetite for inordinate exaltation? Now, exaltation is inordinate when the soul cuts itself off from the very Source to which it should keep close and somehow makes itself and becomes an end to itself. This takes place when the soul becomes inordinately pleased with itself, and such self-pleasing occurs when the soul falls away from the unchangeable Good which ought to please the soul far more than the soul can please itself. Now, this falling away is the soul's own doing, for, if the will had merely remained firm in the love of that higher immutable Good which lighted its mind into knowledge and warmed its

will into love, it would not have turned away in search of satisfaction in itself and, by so doing, have lost that light and warmth. And thus Eve would not have believed that the serpent's lie was true, nor would Adam have preferred the will of his wife to the will of God nor have supposed that his transgression of God's command was venial when he refused to abandon the partner of his life even in a partnership of sin.

Our first parents, then, must already have fallen before they could do the evil deed, before they could commit the sin of eating the forbidden fruit. For such "bad fruit" could come only from a "bad tree." That the tree became bad was contrary to its nature, because such a condition could come about only by a defection of the will, which is contrary to nature. Notice, however, that such worsening by reason of a defect is possible only in a nature that has been created out of nothing. In a word, a nature is a nature because it is something made by God, but a nature falls away from That which Is because the nature was made out of nothing.

Yet, man did not so fall away from Being as to be absolutely nothing, but, in so far as he turned himself toward himself, he became less than he was when he was adhering to Him who is supreme Being. Thus, no longer to be in God but to be in oneself in the sense of to please oneself is not to be wholly nothing but to be approaching nothingness. For this reason, Holy Scripture gives another name to the proud. They are called "rash" and "self-willed." Certainly, it is good for the heart to be lifted up, not to oneself, for this is the mark of pride, but to God, for this is a sign of obedience which is precisely the virtue of the humble.

There is, then, a kind of lowliness which in some wonderful way causes the heart to be lifted up, and there is a kind of loftiness which makes the heart sink lower. This seems to be a sort of paradox, that loftiness should make something up. The reason for this is that holy lowliness makes us bow to what is above us and, since there is nothing above God, the kind of lowliness that makes us close to God exalts us. On the other hand, the kind of loftiness which is a defection by this very defection refuses this subjection to God and so falls down from Him who is supreme, and by falling comes to be lower. Thus it comes to pass, as Scripture says, that "when they were lifting themselves

up thou hast cast them down." Here, the Psalmist does not say: "When they had been lifted up," as though they first lifted themselves up and afterwards were cast down, but "when they are lifting themselves up, at that moment they were cast down," which means that their very lifting themselves up was itself a fall.

Hence it is that just because humility is the virtue especially esteemed in the City of God and so recommended to its citizens in their present pilgrimage on earth and because it is one that was particularly outstanding in Christ, its King, so it is that pride, the vice contrary to this virtue, is, as Holy Scripture tells us, especially dominant in Christ's adversary, the Devil. In fact, this is the main difference which distinguishes the two cities of which we are speaking. The humble City is the society of holy men and good angels; the proud city is the society of wicked men and evil angels. The one City began with the love of God; the other had its beginnings in the love of self.

ethics
Politics

"Theory of the Household"

ARISTOTLE ^{Greek} (384-322 BC) - Plato's best student;
(a household dominated political philosophy)

1. who responding to or what issue in question

• challenges Plato on 3 pts:

1) rejects P's view that we can figure things out by first understanding the whole; A goes from the particular → the general; so he rejects universal principles as being intelligible

2) rejects P's pessimistic view of human nature & its tendency to evil; A assumes a tendency to the good

3) A. more fascinated by the natural sciences, and applies empirical methods to social, political & economic matters.
He is known for his Theory of causation.

2. impact or trajectory of their thought on modern social ethics

• ~~Z.~~ tendency to naturalism (Mar 132)

• strong influence on Aquinas; he harmonized Ari & Xnthinky

* • A links the analysis of the ethos to teleology, while Plato ~~tends to~~ connect the ethos to deontological forms

* • A insists we "face the facts", although his interpretation of the facts (eg money, interest, economic matters) might later be surpassed

• theory of virtue; virtue ethics

• correct the phrase "teleology" - knowledge of attributes of First Unmoved Mover

3. theological implications?

• household's proper locus for production & distribution, rooted in natural human relationships (master/slave, husband/wife, parent/child);

~~Two aspects~~ contrast to the artificiality of commerce, trade & finance which are not "fecund", or productive in themselves

• status of individual objects, reflects on cause of their existence, arrives ultimately at a first cause, God, the unmoved mover

• no life after death

• Aquinas reconciles Augustine + Ari

and accuses us of playing false to our upbringing.

He claims to have knowledge of God, and calls himself a son of the Lord.

Before us he stands, a reproof to our way of thinking, the very sight of him weighs our spirits down;

his way of life is not like other men's, the paths he treads are unfamiliar.

In his opinion we are counterfeit;

he holds aloof from our doings as though from filth;

he proclaims the final end of the virtuous as happy

and boasts of having God for his father.

Let us see if what he says is true.

Let us observe what kind of end he himself will have.

If the virtuous man is God's son, God will take his part

and rescue him from the clutches of his enemies.

Let us test him with cruelty and with torture,

and thus explore this gentleness of his

and put his endurance to the proof,

Let us condemn him to a shameful death

since he will be looked after—we have his word for it.

(Wis. 2:10-20 JB)

6. The discussion does not imply there were no significant differences between Plato and Aristotle. There were, and they have great meaning for Christian ethics. Plato was the source for religious ethics in an idealistic mode. He regarded "true reality" to exist on another plane, together with its unchanging moral content. For Christian ethics this approach meant relating eternity to time and an abiding moral order to the flux and flow of history. Aristotle's approach, by way of contrast, was a "naturalistic" one. He saw a *telos*, or goal, for every species and contended that by studying the world around us, we could discern its patterns, including the moral patterns appropriate to human behavior. Later Christian ethics would draw again and again on "idealistic" and "naturalistic" approaches to ethics. The point in the discussion above, however, is that Plato and Aristotle share the classic concern for virtue which was part of classical culture.

7. This is manifestly the case for Christian "situation ethics." There is one norm, love, and the decision-at-hand. Rules-of-thumb exist for making decisions, but little or no attention is given to the formation of the decision maker herself or himself. Joseph Fletcher's *Situation Ethics* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1966) is usually considered the statement of Christian situation ethics.

8. Martin Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, trans. and ed. Wilhelm Pauck, and published as vol. 15 of *Library of Christian Classics* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), p. 4.

9. The quotations here are from Gerhard O. Forde's discussion of Luther in "The Exodus from Virtue to Grace: Justification by Faith Today," *Interpretation* 34 (January 1980):37. We should add that *Interpretation*, a quarterly journal, specializes in the treatment of biblical materials, often including the way they address moral issues.

10. The 20th-century ethicist who has remade Luther's point with even more power and nuance than Luther is Reinhold Niebuhr. See his magnum opus, *The Nature*

and *Destiny of Man* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941, 1943), especially vol. 1, chap. 7, "Man as Sinner," and vol. 2, chap. 4, "Wisdom, Grace, and Power." Niebuhr explores even more insightfully than Luther our capacities for self-deception and evil in the guise of good, but at the same time he avoids Luther's propensity to relativize ethical choices in the face of God's overwhelming judgment and mercy. See vol. 1, pp. 219-227.

11. Cited by Vicki Kemper, with Larry Engel, "A Prophet's Vision and Grace: The Life of Dom Helder Camara," in *Sojourners* 12 (December 1987):14. The poem is from Dom Helder Camara, *A Thousand Reasons for Living* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), p. 71.

12. Langdon Gilkey, *Shantung Compound* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), ix. Gilkey's account is a firsthand one even though the book was published some 20 years after his experience of Shantung Compound. He used journals kept during those years and checked his account with others who had lived there.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*, p. 110.

17. *Ibid.*

18. The outcome of the parcel distribution episode was as follows: After incision by the Americans, the matter reverted to the Japanese authorities. They took the matter to authorities in Tokyo who decided that each internnee was to receive one parcel each and the remaining parcels would be sent to other camps. The whole episode ended with stinging humor. As the mountain of goods was sorted, it was discovered that included were two hundred pairs of boots sent by the *South African* Red Cross. There were two South Africans in the camp at the time. They posted the following notice: "Due to the precedent that has been set, the South African community is laying claim to all 200 of the boots donated by their Red Cross. We shall wear each pair for three days to signal our right to what is our own property, and then shall be glad to lend some out when not in use to any non-South Africans who request our generous help" (*ibid.*, p. 113).

19. Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, vol. 2, p. 244.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 248.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 248.

22. One of the benefits of Thomas Oglethorpe's *The Use of the Bible in Christian Ethics* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983) is his organization and discussion of ethical theory at the outset of the book. What we here call "teleological" ethics he calls "consequentialist" ethics. The reader is referred to his work for a discussion of the biblical materials in light of this stream in ethics. Oglethorpe gives equal space to "deontological" ethics, which we discuss as "obligation" in the moral life, and to "perfectionist" ethics, which we have named "virtue" and character. They, too, are part of the schema taken to the discussion of biblical materials. The chapter in which these are presented, "Preunderstandings of the Moral Life," pp. 15-47, has the additional benefit of uncovering the human reality which gives rise to these ethical theories. The chapter notes, as well as the selected bibliography, provide guidance for further study.

23. A fuller discussion of this, and the inadequacies of both value ethics and obligation

ARISTOTLE (384 - 322)

- Note his move from the particular (the person) to the general (the state)
- Some of this might be useful for my paper on "Limits to Executive Compensation?"

Ethics

Politics

Book 1: Theory of the Household

- famous theory of exchange which held influence through middle ages
- economic theory is subordinated to political theory which is subordinated to ethics; it allows no isolation of economic motives, or treatment of economics as a separate branch. It focuses on households and cities can better make use of their resources for a better living of the good life.
- Wealth is a means to an end, a moral end. It is limited by the end and cannot be greater than the end but equally it must be sufficient for the end. (ch.8) "there is a bound fixed [for the property needed by the art of household management]" (p21)
- It is not a theory of socialism, but it is inimicable to capitalism which allows for unlimited accumulation of wealth/capital).
- Critical of Plato's scheme (in the *Republic*) which called for a divorce of political power from economic possession, under which the governing class surrenders private property for the sake of pure devotion to public concerns. [naive, as if the public welfare were not concerned with economic matters]. Also critical of Plato's call for the socialization of private property in some classes.
- The citizen of Athens was more often his own employer than employee; there was little of a wage system;
- Ari defends the system of private property, arguing that virtue needs its "equipment" and personality its medium of expression.
- He defends slavery on moral grounds, not economic grounds, arguing that many barbarians are by nature slaves, and to follow one's nature is moral and good.
- Differentiates between household management (*oikonomia*) and the art of acquisition (*chrematistic*). In fact, household management has 4 elements or relationships: master/slave, husband/wife, parent/child, and acquisition.
- Chs 8-11 deals with chrematistic: his use of the words varies from acquiring that which is necessary and commensurate with the ends of a household, to mean acquisition in general, whether sound or otherwise, and more generally to mean forms of acquisition that are perverted or unsound in that they are aimed solely at selfish financial gain. (p22)
- Ch.9 He dislikes when an object is used for exchange instead of its intended end (a shoe should be worn, not traded). Thus he sees the retail trade as not natural. But barter of things that are useful for other things that are useful is deemed not deemed contrary to nature. It is the exchange for money that he dislikes.
- Cf. bk. 5 of *Ethics* in which he explains the roots or and purpose of money, as a means of exchange, but he is always clear that money (having the name, *numismatic*) it exists by law or convention (*nomos*) and not by nature.
- He wants to describe wealth and acquisition as other than an abundance of currency, although he realizes many view it otherwise. But natural wealth, natural acquisition are otherwise. Wealth that is acquired by non-natural means (retail trade

for profit) has no limit (contra natural wealth and acquisition for the household management) as it serves no end.

- Ch.10 outdated agrarian view that generally a householder should be able to count on nature to supply the means he needs. (p.27) Acquisition for acquisition's sake shows its worst side in usury, which makes barren metal breed. (!) Interest (tokos) means offspring.
- Ch.11 acquisition related to pure knowledge v. acquisition related to practical use. Here he talks about "cultivation," the art of running a business but doesn't want to dwell on it too long for that would be "in poor taste." (p.30) Discusses speculation, and creation of a monopoly.
- Ch.12 – discussion of marriage, parenthood and general management of the household
- Ch.13 – the art of household management is a moral art, aiming at the moral goodness of the members of the household.

Bk. 3: The Theory of Citizenship and Constitutions; chs. 9-13 Distributive Justice

- Ch 9 'the principle of a constitution is its conception of justice.' 'true justice means that those who have contributed to the end of the state should have rights in proportion to their contribution to that end (the common promotion of a good quality of life). Distinction between the necessary conditions (contiguity, consanguinity and economic cooperation) of the state's existence and its operative aim.'
- In democracies justice is considered to mean equality [in the distribution of office] for those who are equal. In oligarchies, inequality in distribution of office is considered to be just.
- Justice is relative to persons; just distribution is when relative value of things given correspond to those receiving them
- Distributive justice – justice which distributes the offices of the state among its members on a plan or principle. It is based on proportionate equality (what you put in [of good actions] determines what you get out, within your class). Cf. *Ethics* Bk. 5.
- Polis itself (an association of households and clans in a good life, for the sake of attaining a perfect and self-sufficient existence) should not be confused with the necessary conditions for its existence (e.g. an association for residence, preventing injustice, exchange). (120) "the end and purpose of a polis is the good life, and the institutions of social life are means to that end."
- Ch 12 – Justice is the political good. It involves equality or distribution of equal amounts to equal persons. But who are equals? Determined by their contribution to society's aims. Proportionate equality.
- Justice involves two factors: things, and the persons to whom things are assigned, and it is considered that persons who are equal should have assigned to them equal things.

Class notes:

- James and Varughese next week
- 3 goals: Learn how Ari's key terms fit together; Aristotelian practice and tradition; develop critiques of Ari and his tradition.
- Happiness requires minimum of external goods, MacIntyre does a lot with this.
- MacIntyre wants to use Aristotelian discourse to move away from Weberian/modern emphasis on *techne*, and recapture *phronesis*.
- Politics is building the state to create a structure that provides a context to develop people of virtue (political wisdom is to the polis as phronesis is to the individual)
- Benefit of practical wisdom, as action, virtues. He grounds his ethics in the messy world of people and being.
- 4 forms of Causality: material, formal, final, and
- MT takes away Ari's high valuing of thinking in light of modern elevation of technology (*techne*)

After Virtue, by Alasdair MacIntyre (1984)

Ch 9 Nietzsche or Aristotle?

Argues we have to choose between Nietzsche or Aristotle, as Nietzsche has demolished all Enlightenment project moral philosophers...

109 – "an irreducible plurality of values is itself an insistent and central Weberian theme"; "as Marxists organize and move toward power they always do and have become Weberian in substance, even if they remain Marxists in rhetoric"

111 – 'the deontological character of moral judgments is the ghost of conceptions of divine law which are quite alien to the metaphysics of modernity, and if the teleological character is similarly the ghost of conceptions of human nature and activity' which are not at home in the modern world, we would expect problems of understanding and decision regarding moral judgments.

113 – he understood that what purported to be appeals to objectivity were in fact expressions of subjective will, but also the problem this posed for moral philosophy.

114f argues that Nietzsche's central thesis was supported by Weber's central categories of thought (esp. bureaucracy), hence Nietzsche's prophetic irrationalism (irrationalism because it remains unsolved and his solutions defy reason) remains immanent in the Weberian managerial forms of our culture.

117 – the power of Nietzsche's position turns in the end on the answer to the question: was it right in the first place to reject Aristotle? For if Aristotle's position in *NE* and *Politics*, or something like it could be sustained, then the whole Nietzschean position would be pointless.... Because the truth of Nietzsche's position depends on one central thesis: that all rational vindications of morality manifestly fail and that therefore belief in the tenets of morality need to be explained in terms of a set of rationalizations which conceal the fundamentally non-rational phenomena of the will

134 – root of meaning of *dikiasune* – justice. Dike means order of the universe. To talk of justice without a sense of moral order to the universe is flawed from the start.

134 - Can virtues be translocated from one cultural time and context to another?
MacIntyre's thesis depends upon cultural understanding of the roots of morality... (134)

135 - difference between Athenian and Greek philosophy (4 Athenian views: sophists, Plato, Aristotle, the tragedians); virtues have their place within the social context of the city-state.

Ch 12 - Aristotle's Account of the Virtues

147 – emphasis on historical methods

148 – [can you do Aristotelian ethics without pre-supposing his metaphysics???

148 – the good *eudaimonia* (blessedness; happiness; prosperity) is the aim or *telos*; "It is the state of being well and doing well in being well, of a man's being well-favored himself and in relation to the divine."

148 "virtues are precisely those qualities the possession of which will enable an individual to achieve *eudaimonia* and the lack of which will frustrate his movement toward that *telos*."

150 "the genuinely virtuous agent however acts on the basis of a true and rational judgment" [is this not the same error of the Enlightenment to presume we can be rational and discover truth?]

150 "there is relatively little mention of rules anywhere in the *Ethics*."

150 "Aristotle's insistence that the virtues find their place not just in the life of the individual, but in the life of the city." Remember "the individual is indeed intelligible only as a *politikon zoon*." [an interesting contextual reminder here of community ethos...]

150-1 - [is this the way to unite teleology and deontology, by defining a set of virtues and rules as necessary to a community to be able to achieve its *telos*???

152 – another "crucial link between the virtues and law, for knowing how to apply the law is itself possible only for someone who possesses the virtue of justice." "Law and morality are not two separate realms, as they are for morality"

152 – when no rule is available to decide something one has to act *kata ton orthon logon* (according to right reason)

154 - *intellectual virtues* or practical intelligence (acquired by instruction) and *character virtues* (acquired by exercise/habitation. Yet the two types cannot be separated in Ari's world, as they are today. Today one can be good and morally neutral, not so to Ari.

155 – [his shared view of the good is unrealistic today]

157 – "Ari's belief in the unity of virtues is one of the few parts of his moral philosophy which he inherits directly from Plato.

158-9 [interesting how Ari and everyone of his age, even the Romans later were blind to and presumed the writing off of all non-citizens, non-free men; Jesus was really quite radical1]

159 – Ari knew that the appropriate generalizations are the one which hold only *epi to polu* (for the most part).

159 [if the polis is so central, what about the transience of the polis and its inhabitants?]

162-3 - threats to the Aristotelian structure:

- 1) his teleology presupposes his metaphysical biology; when we reject his metaphysics (as we must) can we still preserve his teleology?
- 2) The relationship of ethics to the structure of the *polis*, as the modern city no longer resembles the ancient city-state. Yes, the city/community/nation is still a form of society
- 3) Ari's inheritance of Plato's belief in unity and harmony of both the individual soul and the city-state, and Ari's consequent perception of conflict as something to be avoided or managed. Yet through conflict we can learn what our ends really are...

Ch 15 The Virtues, the Unity of a Human Life and the Concept of a Tradition

[this is excellent moral philosophical explanation of FIW!!!!!!!]

[basis for my presentation at Avodah's seminar on public/private split]

[link this to a theological narrative to glorify God, stewardship as the practice]

204- "the way in which modernity partitions each human life into a variety of segments, each with its own norms and modes behavior. So work is divided from leisure, private life from public, the corporate from the personal."

204- "life comes to appear as nothing but a series of unconnected episodes – a *liquidation of the self* characteristic"

205 not surprising that it is hard to picture the modern person as the bearer of virtues

205 – "the liquidation of the self into a set of demarcated areas of role playing"

205 – fragmentation of morality follows the rise of modernity; modern conceptions of selfhood; purposes "a *concept of a self whose unity resides in the unity of a narrative* which links birth to life to death as *narrative* beginning to middle to end."

213 "the agent as not only actor, but an author." "... we are never more (and sometimes less) than the co-authors of our own narratives. Only in fantasy do we live what story we please."

214 "the notion of intelligibility [as] the conceptual connecting link between the notion of action and that of narrative."

215-6 "the narratives we live out have both an unpredictable and a partially teleological character."

216 "I can only answer the question 'what am I to do' if I can answer the prior question 'of what story or stories do I find myself a part?'"

218 – *"In what does the unity of the individual life consist? The answer is that its unity is the unity of a narrative embodied in a single life."*

219 – the virtues therefore are to be understood as those dispositions which will not only sustain practices and enable us to achieve the goods internal to practices, but which will also sustain us in the relevant kind of quest for the good, by enabling us to overcome the harms we encounter...the catalogue of virtues will therefor include the virtues required to sustain the kinds of households and the kind of political communities in which men and women can seek for the good together and the virtues necessary for philosophical inquiry about the character of the good.

219 – "a provisional conclusion about the good life for man: *the good life for man is the life spent in seeking for the good life for man, and the virtues necessary for the seeking are those which will enable us to understand what more and what else the good life for man is.*"

220-1 this way of thinking – being inexorably part of a past and family, tribe, nation stands against modern notions of individualism. MacIntyre sees the Kantian attempt to escape into universal maxims as a painful illusion.... What I am therefore is in key part what I inherit, a specific past that is to some degree in my present.

222 – "the narrative phenomenon of embedding is crucial..."

222-3 - "what sustains and strengthens traditions? What weakens and destroys them?" The answer in key part is the exercise or lack of exercise of the relevant virtues. [the answer to the issue of split, compartmentalized lives is to relocate ourselves into a narrative, a tradition, process, and get out of atomized, event-based or role-based thinking!!!!] embed ourselves. [helpful for FIW!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!]

Ch 18 After Virtue: Nietzsche or Aristotle, Trotsky and St. Benedict

257 – the Aristotelian conception of morality that is virtues based has been replaced by a rule-based societal conception of morality

259 – [good summation of his whole project!]

"in spite of the efforts of three centuries of oral philosophy and one of sociology, [we] lack any coherent rationally defensible statement of a liberal individualist point of view (ie Kant) ; and that on the other hand , the Aristotelian tradition can be restated in a way that restores intelligibility and rationality to our moral and social attitudes and commitments."

P278 Acknowledges that *After Virtue* does not satisfactorily address the relation between moral philosophy and theology...

Ethics questions

1. Ari places a lot of importance on conditioning, habituation... what if one does not have the equipment or materials or context to provide this habituation? Isn't Ari rather deterministic, stressing childhood rearing? What about transformation? Role of theology here? (Bk 3 notes)
2. He difference between free will and choice; we are born with choice, but not necessarily free will. (Bk 3)
3. How can Ari's methods (empiricism, from the particular to the general, relationship between the part and the whole) be used to improve on his sometimes flawed conclusions (slavery; role of women) (Bk 3 notes)
4. Justice (Bk 5) – justice is part of a wider societal concept; the virtue which regulates all proper conduct in society; [Have we reduced justice to an individualist view – what is just for me or my tribe, not for society at large?]. "The just is something proportionate", not equal (5.3).
Just distribution matches the right person with the right portion. Reciprocity (*antipeponthos*) literally means 'suffering in return for one's actions'. (5.4)
Role of money in justice. Again proportionality. Money is made by law (in Greek money is called *nomisama*, comes from root *nomos* meaning law, convention) and can be changed by law. Money makes everything comparable, commensurable. (5.5)
Equity and the equitable (*epieikes*) seems to not mean mathematical but a sense of fair play, decency... [is Ari here sounding ethological??]
5. See my handwritten notes for Book 6
6. **Question:** *We've already divorced thought and practice at the beginning of the modern project; then we look for practice that matches the thought. The autonomous individual, can however, still be a helpful corrective to the community. How do we link the modern and pre-modern project, without starting de novo?*
7. **Question – To Ari, there was no distinction between is and ought, (i.e. between fact and value).** He also had no division between social life and political life; they were one and the same to him. Can that be reclaimed even after rejecting his metaphysics and parts of his politics? Can't escape the moral dimension of the activity in Ari's system. Again, the fact-value split is not split to Ari. Remember, too, Ari was a broad generalist (in all of the known areas of knowledge or "specialties" of his day), as were most learned people of his day; today we are all specialized
8. Bk 10 (read Ray's paper from last year), but essentially Ari employs the concept of the divine to align theoretical wisdom (Sophia) with happiness (eudemia, the highest virtue).... Echoes of Calvin: "knowledge of God" as the starting point

Aristotle

Aristotle was Plato's most brilliant student. But he broke with his teacher on several key issues and established his own school. His lectures and writings formed the second great body of philosophical literature in Western intellectual history. Indeed, Alfred North Whitehead, the great twentieth-century thinker, only exaggerated somewhat when he said that "all of philosophy is but a footnote to Plato and Aristotle." Certainly many Jews, Christians, Muslims, and humanist thinkers have found as close an ally in Aristotle as they did in Plato.

Three disagreements between Plato and Aristotle are most important for the study of ethics and business. First, Aristotle does not think that we can figure things out by grasping a sense of the whole, or by discovering universal principles in the depths of the human soul, or by trying to imagine how God must be. He was convinced that we had to begin with particulars and proceed toward more general truths. He believed that we must first discover what makes particular persons virtuous, and then we will know what makes for wise leadership and prudent social practice. Both his *Ethics* and his *Politics* reflect this conviction.

Second, Aristotle had a more optimistic view of human nature. While Plato writes of the human propensity to evil — and then proposes ways to constrain it by means of political authority, education, and a philosophy based on universal principles, Aristotle begins with the assumption that everyone, indeed, everything, has a tendency to the good. If clearly understood and made actual by proper habits and measured experience, all would lead naturally to the common good and the happiness of wisdom — the goal of life. Thus, Aristotle links the analysis of the *ethos* directly to teleology, while Plato tends to connect it to deontological forms.

And third, Aristotle was much more fascinated by the natural sciences, such as biology, than Plato was, and he applied the methods and findings of his empirical study of the natural world to social, psychological, political, and economic matters. Of particular importance is the general theory of causation that he used in all these areas. Given the limits of his resources, it is fair to say that his powers of observation and categorization were among the greatest of any scholar in human history; and it is not accidental that his views on a range of particular questions — the nature of money, the purposes of economic activity, the relationship of commerce to virtue and justice, etc. — were held as both moral and empirical absolutes for centuries. When someone invokes Aristotle, however, it is necessary to inquire whether it is his (seldom irrelevant) demand to face the facts or his (often surpassed) interpretation of them that is in question.

These accents can be found in his writings on economics, management, and business, which occur in his treatment of the household in his *Politics*. In his view, the household is the proper locus for production and distribution, rooted in the natural relationships of master and slave, husband and wife, and parents and children, and in living close to the earth, the source of material creativity. He contrasts these relations to the artificiality of commerce, trade, and finance, which he thinks are not "*fecund*," that is, not really productive.

On the Management of the Household and the Perils of Trade

Aristotle

I

All associations have ends: the political association has the highest; but the principle of association expresses itself in different forms, and through different modes of government.

Observation shows us, first, that every polis or state is a species of association, and, secondly, that all associations are instituted for the purpose of attaining some good — for all men do all their acts with a view to achieving something which is, in their view, a good. We may therefore hold on the basis of what we actually observe that all associations aim at some good; and we may also hold that the particular association which is the most sovereign of all, and includes all the rest, will pursue this aim most, and will thus be directed to the most sovereign of all goods. . . .

VIII

The art of household management is distinct from that of acquisition. It has to provide a stock of requisites for the household; and the different methods by which this is

Aristotle, "The Theory of the Household," in *The Politics of Aristotle*, bk. 1, chaps. 1, 8-10, trans. and ed. Ernest Barker (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946).

done produce different ways of life. . . . Nature intends and provides the requisites for household use; and the acquisition of such requisites is a natural mode of acquisition. Property in them is limited to the amount required by household needs; and it is the nature of all true wealth to be so limited.

We may now study generally all forms of property and the art of acquiring it, following our normal method, the analytical and genetic method, which proceeds from the parts to the whole and from the first beginnings to the developed result. . . . The first problem which may be raised is whether the art of acquiring property is identical with that of household management, or is a part of it, or is ancillary to it; and whether, if it be ancillary, it is so in the sense in which the art of making shuttles is ancillary to the art of weaving, or in the sense in which the art of casting bronze is ancillary to the art of sculpture. . . . Either of these ancillary arts serves its master-art in a different way; the one provides it with an instrument, and the other with material.

By "material" we mean the substance from which a product is made: wool, for instance, serves the weaver as the substance from which he produces cloth; and bronze serves the sculptor in the same way. . . . That the art of household management is not identical with the art of acquiring property is obvious. It is the function of the latter simply to provide either instruments or materials, as the case may be, but it is the function of the former to use what has been provided; for what art can there be, other than that of household management, which will deal with the use of the resources of the household? But the question whether the art of acquisition is a part of it, or a separate art altogether, is one which admits of a divergence of views.

If a man who is engaged in acquisition has to consider from what different sources he can get goods and property, and if property and wealth include many different parts drawn from many different sources, we shall first have to consider these parts before we can consider acquisition as a whole. For instance, we shall have to ask whether farming is a part of the art of acquisition, or a separate art: indeed we shall have to ask that question generally, in regard to *all* modes of occupa-

tion and gain which are concerned with the provision of subsistence.

This leads to a further observation. There are a number of different modes of subsistence; and the result is a number of different ways of life, both in the animal world and the human. It is impossible to live without means of subsistence; and in the animal world we may notice that differences in the means of subsistence have produced consequent differences in ways of life.

Some animals live in herds, and others are scattered in isolation, according as they find it convenient for the purpose of getting subsistence — some of them being carnivorous, some herbivorous, and some, again, omnivorous. Nature has thus distinguished their ways of life, with a view to their greater comfort and their better attainment of what they need: indeed, as the same sort of food is not naturally agreeable to all the members of a class, and as different sorts suit different species, we also find different ways of life even inside the class of carnivorous animals — and equally in that of the herbivorous — distinguishing species from species.

What is true of animals is also true of men. Their ways of life also differ considerably. The most indolent are the pastoral nomads. . . . There are others who live by hunting. . . . Some live by fishing; etc. . . . Most men, however, derive their livelihood from the soil, and from cultivated plants.

The different ways of life, at any rate if we take into account only those who follow an occupation dependent on their own labors, and do not provide themselves with subsistence at the expense of others by exchange and petty trade, may be roughly classified. . . . But there are some who live comfortably by means of a combination of different methods, and who eke out the shortcomings of one way of life, when it tends to fall short of being sufficient in itself, by adding some other way. For example, some combine the pastoral way of life with the freebooting: others combine farming with the life of the chase; and similar combinations may similarly be made of other ways of life, as needs and tastes impel men to shape their lives.

Property of this order, that is to say, for the purpose of subsistence, is evidently given by nature to all living beings, from the instant of their first birth to the days when their growth is finished.

There are animals which, when their offspring is born, bring forth along with it food enough to support it until it can provide for itself: this is the case with insects which reproduce themselves by grubs, and with animals which do so by eggs. Animals which are viviparous have food for their offspring in themselves, for a certain time, of the nature of what is called milk.

. . . We must believe that similar provision is also made for adults. Plants exist to give subsistence to animals, and animals to give it to men. Animals, when they are domesticated, serve for use as well as for food; wild animals, too, in most cases if not in all, serve to furnish man not only with food, but also with other comforts, such as the provision of clothing and similar aids to life.

Accordingly, as nature makes nothing purposeless or in vain, all animals must have been made by nature for the sake of men. It also follows that the art of war is in some sense, that is to say, so far as it is directed to gaining the means of subsistence from animals, a natural mode of acquisition. Hunting is a part of that art; and hunting ought to be practiced — not only against wild animals, but also against human beings who are intended by nature to be ruled by others and refuse to obey that intention — because war of this order is naturally just.

It follows that one form of acquisition, i.e. what may be called the "hunting" form, is naturally a part of the art of household management. It is a form of acquisition which the manager of a household must either find ready to hand, or himself provide and arrange, because it ensures a supply of objects, necessary for life and useful to the association of the polis or the household, which are capable of being stored.

These are the objects which may be regarded as constituting true wealth. True wealth has a limit of size, determined by the purpose of the association it serves; and the amount of household property which suffices for a good life is not unlimited, nor of the nature described by Solon in the verse,

"There is no bound to wealth [that] stands fixed for men."

There is a bound fixed for the property needed by the art of household management, as is also the case in the means required by the other arts. All

mentioned i.e. wealth in the form of currency and the mere acquisition of money.

But the acquisition of wealth by the art of household management as contrasted with the art of acquisition in its retail form has a limit; and the object of that art is not an unlimited amount of wealth. It would thus appear, if we look at the matter in this light, that all wealth must have a limit. In actual experience, however, we see the opposite happening; and all who are engaged in acquisition increase their fund of currency without any limit or pause.

The cause of this contradiction lies in the close connection between the two different modes of acquisition that of the householder, and that of the retail trader. They overlap because they are both handling the same objects and acting in the same field of acquisition; but they move along different lines — the object of the one being simply accumulation, and that of the other something quite different. This overlap of the two modes explains why some men believe that mere accumulation is the object of household management; and in the strength of that belief they stick to the idea that they must keep their wealth in currency untouched, or increase it indefinitely.

But the fundamental cause of this state of mind is men's anxiety about livelihood, rather than about well-being; and since their desire for that is unlimited, their desire for the things that produce it is equally unlimited. Even those who do aim at well-being seek the means of obtaining physical enjoyments; and, as what they seek appears to depend on the activity of acquisition, they are thus led to occupy themselves wholly in the making of money. This is the real reason why the other and lower form of the art of acquisition has come into vogue.

Because enjoyment depends on the possession of a superfluity, men address themselves to the art which produces the superfluity necessary to enjoyment; and if they cannot get what they want by the use of that art — i.e. the art of acquisition — they attempt to do so by other means, using each and every capacity in a way not consonant with its nature. The proper function of courage, for example, is not to produce money but to give confidence. The same is true of military and medical ability: neither has the function of producing money: the one has the function of producing victory, and the other that of producing health.

But those of whom we are speaking turn all such capacities into forms of the art of acquisition, as though to make money were the one aim and everything else must contribute to that aim.

We have thus discussed the unnecessary form of the art of acquisition: we have described its nature, and we have explained why men need or think that they need its services. We have also discussed the necessary form: we have shown that it is different from the other, and is naturally a branch of the art of household management, concerned with the provision of a due amount of subsistence, and *not*, therefore, unlimited in its scope, as the other form is, but subject to definite bounds.

X

Household management is concerned with the use, and not (except in the way of general supervision) with the acquisition, of property; generally the householder should be able to count on nature supplying the means he needs. Acquisition for acquisition's sake shows its worst side in usury, which makes barren metal breed.

The argument of the last chapter provides a clear solution to the problem which we originally raised: "Does the art of acquisition belong to the province of the manager of the household and the statesman and is it thus a part of, or otherwise connected with, their art? Or is it outside that province, and should property be regarded as something on which they can simply count, and with the acquisition of which they need not concern themselves?" It may be urged, in favor of the second alternative, that just as the art of the statesman does not produce human stock, but counts on its being supplied by nature and proceeds to use her supply, so nature must also provide the physical means of subsistence — the land, or sea, or whatever it be. Then, and upon that basis, it is the province of the householder to manage properly the means which are ready to his hand. . . .

On a general view, as we have already noticed, a supply of property should be ready to hand as a provision of nature. It is the business of nature to furnish subsistence for each being brought into

the world; and this is shown by the fact that the offspring of animals always gets nourishment from the residum of the matter that gives it its birth.

The natural form, therefore, of the art of acquisition is always, and in all cases, acquisition from fruits and animals. That art, as we have said, has two forms: one which is connected with retail trade, and another which is connected with the management of the household. Of these two forms, the latter is necessary and laudable; the former is a method of exchange which is justly censured, because the gain in which it results is not naturally made from plants and animals, but is made at the expense of other men.

The trade of the petty usurer, the extreme example of that form of the art of acquisition which is connected with retail trade, is hated most, and with most reason: it makes a profit from currency itself, instead of making it from the process, i.e. of exchange which currency was meant to serve.

Currency came into existence merely as a means of exchange; usury tries to make it increase as though it were an end in itself. This is the reason why usury is called by the word we commonly use, *tokos*, which (in Greek) also means "breed" or "offspring"; for as the offspring resembles its parent, so the interest bred by money is like the principal which breeds it, and as a son is styled by his father's name, so it may be called "currency the son of currency." Hence we can understand why, of all modes of acquisition, usury is the most unnatural.

10/12/1998 (tape recorded lecture)

Aristotle –

An overall view of his system – where/how does it make a difference to theology. Ari's influence on theology was a late-breaking event. Except for his categories, Xnty had little access to his work til the middle ages.

Platonism raised different issues for Xnty; Xnty found a fellow traveler. Xnty, as an offshoot of Judaism, already had notions of God as a creator, idea of providence, God is directing it to an end, faith is ascent to god's will, knowledge of God is real not abstract, God's presence is mediated in the world. Similar issues raised by Platonism, which gave tools for talking about it. Some myths say Plato traveled to Egypt and met with Moses, suggesting that Greek philosophy is really revealed wisdom.

Yet Creation wasn't ex nihilo; Neo-Platonism emanations of God made humanity necessary.

Ari created a logical system which was helpful for discussing theology, even though he wasn't interested in the same theological things as early Xns.

A question between faith and reason emerged with the discovery of Ari. Early church and Platonists each tried to reach proof of God by reason alone. Then Ari discovered, who emphasized reason, was seen as the best in reason, yet it runs contrary to revelation,

Categories to discuss

1. Substance – the subject – a “predicate logic” is introduced. Sentences consist of subject (person) /predicate (verb). The verb says something about the subject. Socrates runs. The predicate helps tell us something about the subject. Ari comes up with 10 different categories, or predicates, or things one can say about the person.

The primary substance (being) – is the *individual* subject, within a sentence. Sort of a basic reality; a concrete person. The we predicate things of Socrates, i.e. he is tall, short, lives somewhere, etc.

Within sentences are subjects the only individual we talk about? No, we talk about groups of beings – secondary substance (*species*: human, a collection of people sharing a common attribute); and then a tertiary substance – *genus* (animal)

One can predicate 10 different ways of that being. The various categories are called accidents. While Socrates is running, that is an accident; he doesn't have to be running, he may be sitting; he could be pale or tan, which are *accidents*, not essential to the substance. But what is the *essence* of the primary substance? A bit unclear. It is more than a blank stage, things do have a defining essence (called its form).

This allows one to make helpful distinctions in defining things, esp in theology. E.g. doctrine of the trinity. Not an invention, always a part of the Xn experience, but hard to comprehend. Gregory of Nyssa draws on Aristotelian categories to say what it is means. Hypostasis (persona); eusia. “Godness” is not an attribute of a species, rather God is a primary substance .[cf Allen book]

Predicate logic, is what we've been discussing. How we predicate things of subjects in a sentence. Primary substances are simply subjects in the sentence. Now, move to Ari's *hulay-morphay* (matter and form) system. What a thing is the form which takes place within matter. Each concrete thing is part of form and matter. A form is what makes a thing what it is. *Ados* (shape or form). This is where Plato gets his idea of eternal exemplars of Forms in heaven, whereas things are separate, just copies of the exemplar. In contrast, Ari says the forms are within individuals, not separate. They are in matter, in substantial. We extract from the accidents that which becomes the form. In the case of humans, it means having a rational soul; humans are rational animals. But that definition of form does not come from a Platonic idea of a copy, rather it is from within its own essence.

What does it mean to be an individual, to be human? (Augustine would say, it means to have the notion of a "will"). Ari, who didn't know that notion, says it is a single human soul, embodied within everyone. How can you just have one common soul, shared out by all in the species? Aquinas solves the problem by saying it is our matter as individuals (accidents?) which makes us distinct, as opposed to leaving it at a general level. He individuates us all.

Ari, things only exist in the number of instances in which they exist ("concrete reversals") v. Plato's Forms where every object had an ideal or perfect form. Ari nothing in your mind which is not in your senses; no ideas except for that which exists (contrary to Xn or Platonic views).

Plato looks to heaven, Ari very good at describing basic concrete reality. But if that is how you describe everything there are problems, it is impossible to talk about heaven.

Form, and universals. Form is what a thing is. Is it its definition? By knowing the form, one can get real knowledge and extend it. Direct sense experience gets extended by thinking... In the mind we put different forms together and create new forms. Syllogisms. Socrates is a man. All men are mortals. Socrates is mortal. Comparing things we know in a logical form, to extend knowledge. Therefore, the universals, the ideas that one uses, its important to know whether they're real or not, pieces of knowledge are used as syllogisms.

Later medieval period nominalism. Nominals; merely names; aren't the thing in itself. Hard for things which cannot be sensed. In Luther's term, nominalism has triumphed; no more confidence in universal reasoning. Luther, not by reason, but by faith alone we receive knowledge.

How do we get to know universals? Through abstraction. We subtract all the accidental aspects to get the form. That's what a thing really is. Then by comparing it in relationship to other things, we can extend our knowledge of the world.

10/14/1998

Aristotle (2nd lecture)

Real knowledge is possible if you know the forms (or so he said)

Ari's physical system, then his metaphysical system (and its problems upon rediscovery in Western Xnty in middle ages)

Form – is essentially action; to be human, means to have a certain characteristic activity, (it possesses a rational soul), namely that it acts a certain way (rationally) in accordance with its character. For Ari the real person is the most virtuous (arete, one has realized the form, in evil, the form is not realized, so still a rational soul but at a low level of realization)

Matter – is not just physical stuff, but an abstraction; it has the capacity to receive (potentiality) and the capacity to resist.

Actuality (the activity coming into existence, what makes one human is the activity of the rational soul) and potentiality (it is really nothing, but a passive capacity to receive the form). A great human being has mastered its matter. (So potential is not in our modern sense, of our possibility)

Based on this, he can get a physics going... what we would call shape/form (not in modern sense of characteristics of matter), he is talking about changes in activity. Behind this he has 4 causes by which form is imparted (or deteriorated). (Remember, to Ari, did not agree with ex nihilo; everything which occurred came from something). Cause, not in the modern sense (why did something happen; what caused it). Think rather about characteristic human activity. The for different ways we cab say "because" or "on account of" (Greek preposition *dia*,). It is a verbal cause. His doctrine of cause: What is the cause of Eerdman Hall? What is the cause of our faith?

1. Formal cause – *that which a thing is* - the idea of the architect, in light of the final cause (living in grace, life in God)
2. Final cause – *for what a thing is* (e.g. the housing of students) (love of neighbor and God)
3. Material cause – *that out of which a things comes* (e.g. the bricks); that which endures (it is not always matter or physical, highly metaphorical, e.g. syllables are the material cause of words) (humans)
4. Efficient cause – *that by which something comes into being* (e.g. the craftsman) (the Holy Spirit)

Metaphysics – prime mover (God) <--> prime matter

Primer mover is pure *activity*, no potentiality (Aquinas). Not material. Nothing gets in the way of God. Thought thinking on thoughts; a notion of perfection. Stars move in a perfect motion, moving orbitally to return to its starting point. A characteristic activity. Every form has an inner self or desire (*horme*), a tendency to realize a particular form, so hey engage in a particular activity. So stars move ... All things are connecting activity. Note that the prime mover never goes out of itself, it is simply there as a perfection; everything else imitates it.

What does this have to do with Xnty?

Problems for Xnty...

1. It lacks creation *ex nihilo* (as did Plato, though Plato at least acknowledged a God).
2. Moreover, the primer mover is utterly remote, it does not participate. It is not worthy of Xn worship; it is the god of the philosophers. Ari would reject that this god that would demand things of god's people, interact with and care for God's people.
3. Faith depends upon individual ascent; Ari's idea of form prevents it.
4. Because it is a system of causes, many Xns really read Ari as a fatalist, that is everything is determined by causes. This fatalism went against Xnty's concept of freedom of the will (but actually more compatible with Islam, who had access to Ari; Xns didn't have access to the full library until crusades)

Phrenesos – Ari's practical wisdom on how to live a virtuous life is helpful to Xns.

Ari has a scale: 1) those with practical wisdom, by nature, 2) the continent (morally strong), 3) the incontinent (morally weak); 4) the viscous, the brute who knowingly disregards the right thing. Ari does not see this as rules, rather we go out and find the virtuous person, and imitate them.

Two truth theory – truth we discover by reason and by revelation. Faith and reason *appear* to be at odds to each other, in Ari's system. How do you use reason in theology?

Aquinas says: Takes the truths of revelation as first principles; even though you cannot reason to them, you can reason from them. 2nd Ari's reason depends on being in the world, yet if God is all activity, and removed, how can you talk about God's effects? We can reason from the effects of God (ie creation)

Xnty has always had a hard time with Ari, yet embraced Plato, and middle Platonism.

Prime matter is pure *potentiality*; actually an abstraction, the minute we think of it we imbue it with defining characteristics and form. The world to Ari is eternal, it has always There. It is not sequential in time, like to Newton. If form is the activity, the perfect form is

Aristotle and MacIntyre
(TH910 Theory and Praxis seminar - 9/28/99)
Conversants: Paul Kim and David Miller

Clarifications

1. *Eudaimonia* - what does Aristotle mean by this (Rubén #1), and is it possible only for those who have the external goods? (Shang-Jen #1)
2. Aristotle's metaphysics and psychology of action (*praxis*) -
 - what is Aristotle's understanding of anthropology; the soul; reason and passions (cf. Bk 1.13; 6.12; Raimundo #1a; Paul #1)
 - role and control of the passions in *praxis* (action); the make up of the rational and irrational parts of the soul (James #1; Paul #2)
3. wisdom - *Sophia* (theoretical wisdom) v. *phronesis* (practical wisdom); what are the aims and roles of reasoning in each (Ray #1, Rachel, #1)
4. Relationship between terms - means and ends, i.e., the relationship between choice, deliberation, action, virtues and practical wisdom (cf. Bk 6.9; 3.2; James #3, Varughese #2)
5. Absolutes - is there any timeless universal deontological value for Aristotle? (Varughese #1)
6. The three forms of life: hedonistic, political, contemplative. Aristotle privileges the contemplative, and yet most of his writing is about the political. Is the contemplative life an ideal or a possibility? (Shang-Jen #1b)

Critiques

1. MacIntyre
 - Is a Nietzsche critique equally applicable to MacIntyre's reinterpreted Aristotle? (Rubén #2)
 - Is MacIntyre's view of pre-modern society and its "order" romanticized, ignoring the injustices of that day (Ray #3; Atola #1; Varughese #2 & #3)
 - Is the Aristotle v. Nietzsche typology limiting? What about the cross? (James #2, Rachel #3)
 - Is MacIntyre's skeptical view of "virtuous leaders make virtuous people" contradicted by some East Asian national experiences? (Shang-Jen #2)
2. Aristotle and deontology - is there an implied deontology functioning behind Aristotle's teleology when he talks of some things being "naturally wrong" (Bk 2.6; Raimundo #2)
3. Is Aristotle elitist? (Atola #2)

Implications

1. Is Aristotle's view of *praxis* useful for our times, despite his flawed metaphysics, anthropology, and conclusions? (Rubén #1, Rachel #2, Raimundo #1b)
2. What are the implications of placing oneself under the authority of a practice, vis-à-vis the desire to change that practice (cf. MacIntyre p.190, Ray #2). How can one change a *praxis*?
3. MacIntyre's project is to reclaim and recast Aristotle. What are some practical implications for modern society if such a project is successful? (Rachel #4)

4. Can we recover Aristotle's insistence on the unity between "is/ought," to overcome the "fact/value split" problem of post-modernity? If so, how is it possible? (David #1)
5. MacIntyre talks (Ch15) of life's different spheres and fragmentation. In *praxis*, how can we hold together the self amidst life's many spheres of morality? (David #2)
6. *Praxis* and *eupraxis* - taken seriously, how do we theologians make the move from theory to *praxis/eupraxis*, as "the purpose of phronesis is not to *know* what is just, noble, and good, but to *become* just, noble, and good." (Paul & David)

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- 3.56 J.L. Ackrill, 'Aristotle's definitions of *Psyche*', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 73 (1972-73), 119-33, repr. in [3.26], 65-75.
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 3.65 M. Schofield, 'Aristotle on the imagination', in [3.44], 99-129, repr. in [3.26], 103-32.
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CHAPTER 4

Aristotle: Ethics and politics

ETHICS

Roger Crisp

BACKGROUND AND METHOD

Aristotle wrote no books on ethics. Rather, he gave lectures, the notes for which subsequently were turned by others into two books, the *Nicomachean Ethics* (*NE*) and the *Eudemian Ethics* (*EE*). There is much dispute over the relative dating and merit of these works, but the traditional view is that the *Nicomachean Ethics* represents Aristotle's philosophical views on ethics in their more developed form, perhaps at around 330 BC, the *Eudemian Ethics* probably having been composed earlier for a more popular audience (though see Kenny [4.12]). There is a third ethical work sometimes attributed to Aristotle, the *Magna Moralia*, but this is probably post-Aristotelian.

NE contains ten 'books', while *EE* contains eight. Oddly, they have books in common: books 4-6 of *EE* are the same as books 5-7 of *NE*. Scholarly disagreement has focused particularly on which work these books properly belong to. Controversy continues, but the more widely held view, based on study of Aristotle's discussion of pleasure in the common books, is that they belong to the *EE*.

It is *NE* which has traditionally been studied, along with the common books, so it is on that work that we shall concentrate. But *EE* should not be ignored by serious readers of Aristotle. Its differences from *NE* are subtle and interesting, and even if *EE* is earlier, it illuminates how Aristotle's ethical thought developed. Whatever the relation between the works, it cannot be denied that *NE* is one of the most important works in ethics ever composed, both from the historical point of view and that of contemporary moral philosophy.

Aristotle lectured in a room containing a three-legged table, wooden sofas, a whiteboard, and a bronze statue and globe. On the walls were, among other things, lists of virtues and vices, and depictions of Socrates. His audience would have consisted primarily of young men, of more than humble origin, who might hope to make their way in a career that was at least partly political. As Aristotle spoke from his notes, it is almost certain that he would have expanded upon or clarified certain points, perhaps in response to questions from his audience. The style in which we have *NE* has had the result that much Aristotelian scholarship has been, and continues to be, pure interpretation of what he says. But in the last few decades in particular, his views have been seen as the foundation for a modern ethics, based on virtue.

Aristotle's audience would have been able to make a difference to fourth-century Athens, and *NE* is explicitly practical in intent. This is most certainly not an anthropological work, attempting dispassionate study of the common morality of the day. Aristotle, like Socrates and Plato before him, believed that certain aspects of that common morality were deeply mistaken. He wished to persuade his readers of this, intellectually and practically: 'Our present study is not, like the others, for intellectual purposes. For we are inquiring into what virtue is not so that we may know, but to become good men, since otherwise it would be pointless' (1103b26-9).

What, for Aristotle, is ethics? A modern work on ethics will concern duties, obligations, responsibilities, rights. Those notions do have analogues in Aristotle's ethical treatises, but he is primarily concerned with the question of the good life for human beings. The central ethical question for Greek philosophers was not, 'What morally ought I to do or not to do?', but, 'What is *eudaimonia*?' *Eudaimonia* is usually translated as 'happiness', and we shall conform to that usage (see Kraut [4.22]). But some prefer to use notions such as 'well-being' or 'flourishing', in order to remove any implication that *eudaimonia* is a matter of contentment or short-term pleasure. It should not be forgotten, either, that *daimon* is Greek for 'luck', and that *eu* means 'well'. In *NE* 1-9, indeed, Aristotle discusses the question of whether happiness is merely a matter of good fortune.

Greek culture was a culture of excellence, in the sense that young men were widely encouraged to compete with one another in many areas of life, including, of course, athletic, intellectual and aesthetic activity. (The Greek word for excellence, *aretê*, has its root in *anêr*, 'man', as opposed to 'woman'.) One of the central questions asked by Socrates, who provided the inspiration for Plato and hence the whole of Western philosophy, was, 'What is *aretê*?' *Aretê* has traditionally been translated 'virtue', and we shall again conform to tradition. But it should be remembered that, according to ancient Greek usage, a horse that ran fast or a knife that cut well could be said to have an *aretê*, as could a person who told good jokes, as we shall see below.

Greek philosophers, then, were concerned to map the relations of happiness and virtue. Most of what we know of Socrates is through the depiction of him in Plato's dialogues, but from these it appears that Socrates held that virtue is knowledge. This has the implication, as radical then as now, that the person who performs a vicious action does so out of ignorance. Socrates held also that knowledge, virtue and happiness were very closely related, and, indeed, put his view dramatically into practice. Given the chance to escape the death penalty imposed upon him by the city of Athens, he chose to remain, believing virtue to be 'the most precious possession a man can have' (Plato, *Crito*, 53c7).

Plato continued the Socratic tradition, identifying *dikaionê* (usually translated 'justice', though the term covers morality more broadly) with an ordering of the parts of the soul in which reason governs desire and the emotions. For both Socrates and Plato, then, virtue was an extremely important component in human happiness, just how important being a central issue in modern discussions. Aristotle is most plausibly seen as working within the same tradition, asking the same sorts of questions and employing the same sorts of concepts, though his account is of course informed by the philosophical apparatus he developed in other areas of his own thought. Two things set him apart from Socrates and Plato. First, and here again we meet Aristotle's emphasis on practicality, virtue itself is of no value; what matters is actually performing virtuous actions. Secondly, for Aristotle virtuous activity is the only component of happiness. Again, this has some very radical philosophical implications.

The methods of the three philosophers were, however, quite different. Socrates proceeded by asking questions of those around him, and then subjecting the answers he received to searching scrutiny. Plato wrote his philosophy down, in the form of dialogues between Socrates and others. But in his later work, the dialogue form is merely a way to express his own radical metaphysical and moral views. Aristotle was quite reflective about method in ethics, and *NE* 1145b2-7 is one of his clearest statements. Here he says that, when considering an ethical issue, one should first set out (*tithenai*) the *phenomena* (which here means the views long accepted by most people, and the views of philosophers), then formulate the *aporiai* or puzzles that emerge, and finally do one's best to resolve these puzzles in the light of the original *phenomena*.

The way Aristotle goes on to treat the problem of *akrasia* just after this statement is a good example of this method at work. (For our purposes, we can translate *akrasia* as 'weakness of will', though we should not forget that there is some dispute about whether the Greeks had a concept of the will.) On the one hand, nearly everyone accepts that reason can come into conflict with desire, and lose. I know that this large cream cake will make me feel sick, but my desire for it is such that I cannot resist. On the other hand, because virtue is knowledge, Socrates refused to allow that people knowingly took

what they knew to be the worse course of action. Aristotle seeks to resolve the puzzle by suggesting that people do indeed do what they know to be worse, but that they 'know' only in an attenuated sense. When I say, 'I know this cake is going to make me sick', I am merely spouting the words, like a drunk or an actor on stage, without a full grip on their content.

Aristotle faces the problem all philosophers face, that he can set out the views of others and the philosophical problems that arise only from his own perspective. It can be questioned whether he really keeps to his methodological principles, and, if so, whether he is not heading in the direction of conservatism. There is no doubt that the *tithenai* method is often quite far from his mind, when he is engaging in straightforward philosophical argument, based either on premises from elsewhere in his philosophy or on what is generally believed. But even here, as we shall see in the case of his discussion of happiness, he is keen to show that his view chimes with the views of the many and the wise. That is something Socrates and Plato in their ethics never tried to do. They have more in common with those moral philosophers known as 'intuitionists', who suggest that there are certain fundamental truths about ethics which many people cannot see. Aristotle's moral epistemology has some similarity to the forms of 'coherentism' which dominate contemporary philosophy, such as the 'reflective equilibrium' of John Rawls, which attempts to bring philosophical principles into harmony with our reactions to particular cases (see Rawls [4.52]). But, as already suggested, some of Aristotle's views in ethics, and indeed in politics (see below), were far from conservative.

Aristotle's audience, as we saw, would have consisted primarily of well-off young men. They also had to be well brought-up. There is no point, Aristotle suggests, in those who are too young to understand ethics coming to lectures on the subject. In that respect, ethics is unlike mathematics, where prodigies are possible. The reason is that ethical understanding comes not only through philosophy, but first through ethical activity itself. We learn by doing. So to benefit from Aristotle's lectures – to become better – you will need what he calls to *hōti*, 'the that', a basic grasp of the notions of virtue, happiness, and all that they entail. After reflection, aided by the lectures, will come to *diboti*, 'the because', an understanding of the principles that lie behind ethics (NE 1095b6–7).

Because of the importance of practical experience, ethics is unlike mathematics in its capacity for precision (and the same goes for politics: see pp. 127, 133). This is something that Aristotle stresses several times early in NE (1.3; 1098a20–b8). A mathematics lecture can tell you exactly how to carry out a particular differential calculus, but an ethics lecture can give you only rough guidance on how to act in a particular case. The circumstances of human life are indefinitely complex and unpredictable, to the point that often experience is the only guide. As we shall see below, cultivating the intellectual virtue of *phronēsis* ('practical wisdom') will consist partly in developing a

sensitivity to the salient features of particular cases that does not consist in mechanically subsuming the case under an explicit rule one has learned.

This aspect of Aristotle's understanding of ethics also explains something that some of his readers find peculiar. The core of NE, rather than offering us sets of principles or rules, consists in a set of portraits of the virtuous man. The point of these portraits, however, is to enable us to 'latch on' to the nature of the virtue in question, and what it requires, so as better to be able to develop and to practise that virtue ourselves.

HAPPINESS

Aristotle is keen to point out to the potential politicians in his audience that ethics is a preliminary to politics (NE 1.2). He places the fields of human understanding in a hierarchy, those above in the hierarchy governing those below. At the top is politics, which governs the other disciplines in that it legislates when they are to be studied. Now the point of studying ethics is to understand the nature of individual human happiness; this is the 'end' of studying ethics. Politics will include that end, in the sense that it will decide how the human good is to be pursued within a city, and how the good of one person is to be balanced against that of another.

Just as now, there was no shortage of views in fourth-century Athens concerning the human good. Aristotle splits the most common of these views into three (NE 1.5). First, he suggests, most people identify happiness with pleasure (this is the view known as hedonism). Aristotle dismisses the life of pleasure as the life of an animal, leaving it to later philosophers such as Epicurus and John Stuart Mill to draw attention to conceptions of happiness that stressed the non-bodily pleasures. Politicians are more sophisticated, he claims, seeing happiness as consisting in honour, the second view. This, however, is to be rejected because it depends on the opinions of others. We tend to believe that the basis of happiness is not as fragile as this. And, anyway, people pursue honour only to assure themselves of their own goodness, so that virtue is prior to honour. But virtue cannot be happiness either, since one could be in a coma or suffering the worst evils and be virtuous, and no one would count a person in such a position as happy. The third type of life Aristotle mentions is the contemplative life, and this receives substantial discussion at the end of NE (10.7–8).

We can already see how Aristotle allows commonly accepted views about happiness – such as that the person in a coma cannot be happy – to shape the argument alongside his own philosophical arguments – such as that virtue is prior to honour. The two methodologies come together shortly afterwards in his putting certain conceptual constraints on the notion of happiness, which are intended to be uncontroversial (1097a15–1097b21). Again, the notion of a hierarchy of goods or ends is central. Some goods or

ends are clearly subordinate, or less 'final' (*teleios*), than others. When I go to town to buy a flute, my goal – the flute – is merely subordinate to some other goal, such as enjoying music. The highest good, Aristotle suggests, is thought to be unconditionally final, in the sense that it is never sought for anything else, while other things are sought for it. Happiness is unconditionally final, since we choose it for itself and not for other things, while we choose other things – flutes, honour, pleasure, the lot – for the sake of being happy.

The notion of 'self-sufficiency' (*autarkeia*) was important in the philosophical world at the time NE was composed, and Aristotle points out how reflection upon this notion shows us something about the nature of happiness: 'We take a self-sufficient thing to be what, on its own, makes life worthy of choice and lacking in nothing; and this is what we think happiness be does' (1097b14–16). Again, then, happiness is final. Nor should happiness be counted as one good among others, since then it would not be self-sufficient or the most worthy of choice of all goods. For it would always be improvable.

Quite what Aristotle means here has been subject to a great deal of philosophical discussion (see, for example, Ackrill [4.18]; Crisp [4.20]; Keyt [4.24]; Kenny [4.23]; Kraut [4.22]). On one view, ascribing to Aristotle what is called the dominant view of happiness, he is arguing that happiness must be the most worthy of choice of all goods, and so superior to other goods. As we shall see below, there are strong reasons for identifying such a good with 'contemplation' (*theoria*). On another view, Aristotle holds an inclusive view of happiness, believing it to be the most final good in the sense that it includes all others. Flutes, honour, pleasure, and so on, are all, in some sense, parts of happiness.

The inclusive view, on the face of it, seems to fit better with Aristotle's stress on a hierarchy of ends the higher items of which 'include' (*peritchein*, NE 1094b6) those below. His famous 'function' argument, which we shall discuss below, does throw up a serious problem for the inclusivist interpretation, but we should first attempt to be clearer about just what notion of inclusion is in play.

Help is at hand in the form of Aristotle's discussion of Eudoxus at NE 1172b23–34. Eudoxus had argued that pleasure was the good (that is, the highest good), since pleasure, when added to any other good, makes it more worthy of choice, and the good is increased by the addition of itself. This is a poor argument, of course, but what matters here is Aristotle's comment upon it. He says that all Eudoxus proves is that pleasure is one of the goods, and it goes on to note that Plato uses the same sort of argument to show that pleasure is not the good. The pleasant life, Plato argued, is more worthy of choice when combined with wisdom, so it is not the good. For the good is such that nothing can be added to it to make it more choiceworthy.

Aristotle does not mean in his claims about finality either that a happy life has to contain all the goods or that a happy life cannot be improved upon.

The discussion of Eudoxus and Plato shows that he is primarily thinking of conceptions of happiness when he speaks of inclusion. A conception of happiness – that is, a list of the things that happiness consists in – must be complete. If I can add some good (such as wisdom) to a proposed list, then that list is to that extent, faulty. So the correct conception of happiness must include all the goods there are. As we shall now see, this poses a serious problem of interpretation of Aristotle's own view.

Having set out the conceptual requirements on any conception of happiness, Aristotle suggests that we may be able to identify exactly what happiness consists in if we can discover the *ergon*, or 'function', of a human being (NE 1097b24–1098a20). Again, though there are problems with it, 'function' is the traditional translation here, so we shall continue to use it. The *ergon* of X is X's characteristic activity, the sort of thing engaging in which makes X what it is. Thus, the *ergon* of a knife is to cut. That is also its function, of course, but the notion of function introduces the notion of some external purpose which is not present in the Greek.

What, then, is the function, the characteristic activity, of a human being? It cannot be nutrition or growth, since these are common to humans and plants. Nor can it be sense-perception, since that is common to humans and other animals. All that is left is rationality or reason. Now the function of a lyre-player is to play the lyre, and the function of a good lyre-player to play the lyre well. So if we assume that the human function is that activity of the soul that expresses reason, then the good man's function is to do this well. Doing anything well is doing it while expressing a virtue, so the human good turns out to be that activity of the soul that expresses virtue.

Happiness, then, is virtuous action. This explains why Aristotle spends most of NE, a work concerning happiness, offering accounts of the nature of virtuous action. Before going on to consider the conclusion of the function argument in the light of the conceptual requirements that precede it, let us first consider the function argument itself. Aristotle's argument here is a form of perfectionism, that is, a view which holds that the human good consists in the perfection of human nature. An old objection to his argument is its proceeding by elimination. Why should the human function not include, say, sense-perception? And how can excelling in rational activity be characteristic of human beings when the gods engage in just such activity?

This objection, however, fails to take into account an obvious assumption lying behind the function argument, namely that plants and animals are not the sort of beings to which we ascribe happiness. So, given that humans are happy, it makes sense to seek the characteristic that distinguishes humans from plants and animals. True, this characteristic may be, indeed is, shared with the gods, but that does not matter for the purposes of the argument here.

Another objection is more serious. Aristotle, it is said, forgets the distinction between 'the good man' and 'the good for man' (Glassen [4.21]).

I may well accept that the good or paradigm example of a human being is one whose life exemplifies the virtues. But it does not follow that such a life is the best life for the person who lives it. For it could be that by going against one's nature one can obtain a life that is better for oneself.

Finally, there is a general concern about perfectionist arguments as a whole, that they come too late. Most perfectionists imply that they are carrying out an independent inquiry into human nature, and then allowing their conception of the human good to be shaped in the light of their understanding of human nature. But all too often it can be suggested that the perfectionist is allowing his already-formed views of what happiness consists in to guide his conception of human nature itself. So the notion of human nature is left as a wheel spinning idly. In our conclusion below, we shall discuss the important role the notion of human nature plays in Aristotle's politics, and raise a similar concern.

There are, then, problems with the function argument. But the function argument is not Aristotle's only way of arguing for his conception of happiness as virtuous activity. As we suggested, the portraits he paints of the attractions of the virtuous life, and the bad features of the vicious life, particularly in the middle books of *NE*, can be seen as speaking in favour of the virtuous life.

Two further problems concerning Aristotle's conception of happiness remain. The first concerns the relation between the conceptual requirement of inclusiveness and the idea that happiness consists in virtuous activity. Recall how the argument of Plato referred to in the Eudoxus discussion worked. If I suggest that happiness consists in pleasure, my claim can be refuted by showing that a life that contains wisdom as well as pleasure is better than a life which contains (the same amount of) pleasure. My list is incomplete, and I must add wisdom to it. The conclusion of the function argument leaves Aristotle with one item on his list: virtuous activity. Why should we not criticize him in the same way, by insisting that he add other goods, such as pleasure, wisdom or friendship, to his list?

Aristotle's response here would be that virtuous activity itself includes these goods (*NE* 1.8). The virtuous man will find true pleasure in virtuous actions, the exercise of virtue essentially involves wisdom, and friendship is one of the virtues. Aristotle even has a response to those who suggest that happiness requires 'external goods', such as money. For virtuous action will itself require such goods. You cannot, for example, be generous unless you have something to be generous with.

Aristotle's view of happiness, however, does have a very radical implication, so radical that it throws some doubt on the plausibility of the view. According to Aristotle's account of happiness, there is nothing good in the life of the vicious person, since happiness consists in virtuous activity. This is a brave and interesting claim, and solidly within the Socratic-Platonic

tradition, but it is too strong. Aristotle's response to the objection just discussed above fails properly to individuate goods. For him to demonstrate that pleasure need not be added to the list, he has to show not only that virtuous activity involves pleasure, but that there is no pleasure independent of virtuous activity. This, however, would seem very hard to support. Can the vicious man not enjoy a good meal as much as the virtuous man? Some pleasures, and some other goods, are independent of virtuous activity, and will provide some rationale for the vicious life. Aristotle would then have to retreat to the less exciting, but more plausible, view that virtuous action offers the best prospects of happiness. This, however, would be enough for his view to be of practical import for his audience.

The other problem of interpretation concerns the relation between the virtues 'of character' – courage, generosity, and so on – and the activity of contemplation. Aristotle begins *NE* 10.7 as follows: 'If happiness is activity expressing virtue, it is reasonable that it express the highest. This will be the virtue of the best thing.' He goes on to suggest that the 'best thing' is understanding (*nous*), the activity expressing which is contemplation (*theôria*), and to defend the claim at length that contemplation is 'final' (*teleios*) happiness.

There are many interpretations available of these claims of Aristotle, from the idea that he is straightforwardly inconsistent in his views concerning happiness to the notion that these chapters are an 'end-of-term joke', at the expense of Plato (Ackrill [4.18]; Moline [4.26]). One of the most common views has been that contemplation is indeed what Aristotle has meant all along by virtuous activity: the function argument does, after all, conclude that if there are more virtues than one, happiness will be that which expresses the best and 'most final' (*NE* 10.9.8a17–18).

Aristotle throws dust in our eyes by attempting in *NE* to answer several questions at once. One is the question of what goes on the list of goods that constitute happiness, and his answer there is virtuous activity. Such activity can involve either contemplation or the virtues of character, and happiness can be found in either (1178a9). Another question, however, is, given this conception of happiness, which activity is the most conducive to happiness. And here his answer is, in the ordinary way of things, contemplation.

It may have been that some in Aristotle's audience were disappointed by the conclusion of *NE*. For Aristotle gives no explicit guidance on which kind of life to go for, that of the philosopher or of the politician. But he would have argued that which life is likely to be the happiest for any one individual depends on the particular circumstances of the case. His general advice is that contemplation is peculiarly valuable, so if one is capable of it in any reasonable degree, the life of the philosopher is probably the one to aim for. But if one is not a talented thinker but an excellent politician, one should probably choose the life of action. And there is nothing to prevent one, in the

manner perhaps of Plato's 'philosopher kings', attempting to combine both activities within the same life.

To sum up our discussion so far, Aristotle's enquiry is essentially a political one, concerning the running of a city. Political arrangements will be concerned with the promotion of human happiness, and this turns out to be virtuous activity. So from happiness, we are, like Aristotle, led into discussing virtue. And virtue, Aristotle points out (NE 1102a7-13), is again anyway a central topic of politics, since the 'true politician' spends more time on attempting to instantiate virtue in his citizenry than on anything else.

VIRTUE

Happiness is virtuous activity, and virtuous activity is activity of the soul. So it is important, Aristotle says, for the politician to have some understanding of the soul itself (NE 1.13). The soul can be divided into rational and nonrational parts. The rational part, with which, for example, we contemplate, is correlated with the 'intellectual virtues', the most important of which in connection with ethics is *phronesis*, or 'practical wisdom'. The nonrational part can be subdivided, one of its subdivisions being concerned with nutrition and growth. The other part, however, has more in common with reason. We know that it exists, as Plato pointed out in the *Republic*, because there is something in us that struggles with reason in certain circumstances, such as when we are weak-willed. This part is also capable of obeying reason, as in the case of the continent man. Its virtues, the 'virtues of character', are courage, generosity, temperance, and so on. NE is concerned primarily with the virtues of character, though, as we shall see below, intellectual virtues have an important role to play in full virtue.

Virtue of thought comes mostly from teaching, and there are some cases in which it is acquired very early. Think, for example, of a mathematical prodigy. But the virtues of character arise through habit (*ethos*) (NE 2.1). Teaching, of course, is important in steering people into the correct habits, but there is nothing in acquiring virtue analogous to the 'flash of inspiration' one finds in learning mathematics. Becoming virtuous is more like learning a skill, such as building. One learns to build a wall by doing it, and if one does it well, one will become a good builder. So performing just actions or courageous actions will result in one's becoming just or courageous. Since the habits we get into are very much a result of the guidance we receive, it is essential for the moral educator – a parent at the individual level, a politician at the social level – to understand the role of habit.

Someone might here raise a puzzle (NE 2.4). Surely, a person who is building is already a builder, and similarly someone who is performing just or generous actions is already virtuous? Aristotle points out that someone learning to build may just be following instructions, and notes that, for an

agent to be virtuous, he must not only perform virtuous actions, but perform them in the right way: knowing what he is doing, choosing them for their own sake, and doing them out of a well-grounded disposition.

The second of these three conditions provides a possible link between Aristotle's ethics and the later ethics of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). According to Kant, moral worth attaches to an action only in so far as it is motivated by respect for the moral law. This has seemed objectionable to some philosophers, who believe, for example, that an action motivated by a loving concern for another person is morally praiseworthy. Here we find Aristotle telling us that a virtuous action is chosen for its own sake, not, for example, so that another person can be helped. Elsewhere he says that the virtuous man chooses virtuous actions for the sake of *to kalon*, 'the fine' or 'the noble' (NE 1115b12-13), and it is plausible to see this as, for him, equivalent to choosing them for their own sake. Again, however, there is no reference to concern for others: the focus is on oneself and on the quality of one's actions.

Virtues, then, are dispositions (*hexeis*), engendered in us through practice. Aristotle characterizes the nature of virtue using his famous 'doctrine of the mean' (NE 2.6). The idea of the mean had developed in Greek medicine, the basic thought being that the different bodily elements should be neither excessive nor deficient, but in harmony. Aristotle was probably influenced also by Plato's conception in the *Republic* of the harmony of the elements in the best soul. Virtue of character aims at the mean in the following way:

We can, for example, be afraid or be confident, or desire, or feel anger or pity, or in general feel pleasure and pain both too much and too little, and in both ways not well; but at the right times, about the right things, towards the right people, for the right end, and in the right way, is what is intermediate and best, and this is proper to virtue. Likewise, there is an excess, a deficiency and a mean in the case of actions as well.

(NE 1106b18-24)

It is important to be clear that Aristotle is not advocating here a doctrine of moderation. In the case of anger, for example, one should be moderate only if moderate anger is required in the circumstances. In some cases, such as a mild slight, mere crossness will be called for, in others, absolute fury. It all depends on the case.

In the case of anger, then, the person with the virtue of even temper will feel angry at the right times, about the right things, in the right degree and so on. Imagine that something happens to me at three o'clock, the reasonable and virtuous response to which is anger. How is this 'in a mean'? For Aristotle cannot intend us to think that it is in a mean between getting angry at two o'clock and getting angry at four o'clock!

In the case of anger, you can err in two ways regarding when you get angry. You can get angry when you should not, or you can fail to get angry when you should. Both will be vicious, and if you have a disposition to either, you have a vice. The same goes for the other conditions: you can get angry with the wrong people, or fail to get angry with the right people, get angry for the wrong reasons, or fail to get angry for the right reasons, and so on. So, as Aristotle says, there is only one way to get it right, but many ways to go wrong (*NE* 1106b28–35).

The passage quoted above primarily concerns feelings, and some authors have written as if there is a feeling underlying each of Aristotle's virtues of character. But this is not so, for example, in the case of a central virtue, generosity (*NE* 4.1). In fact, more to the fore in Aristotle's discussions of the individual virtues are the actions that exemplify them. And our account above shows how to understand the notion of an action's being in a mean. Generosity is concerned with the giving away of money. The generous man is the one who gives it away, for example, at the right times, whereas the prodigal man will give it away at the wrong times, and the ungenerous man will fail to give it away when he should.

It is sometimes suggested that there is something almost tautologous about the doctrine of the mean: you should do what is right, and what is right is what is not wrong (see Barnes [4.15]). But in fact the doctrine of the mean represents an important ethical discovery by Aristotle. He divides human life into certain central 'spheres', concerning the control of money, social life, sexual desire, common emotions such as anger or fear, and so on, and notices that there is a right way to act or to feel in each of these spheres, depending on the circumstances. And unlike an ethics of constraint (a list of 'don'ts'), Aristotle sees that ethics requires positive action or feeling, not mere avoidance. Each sphere is, as it were, neutrally characterized: if I know that you have given away money, I cannot yet tell whether that is virtuous. The virtuous man is the one who acts and feels well, and the vicious are those who perform the same actions and feel the same feelings at the wrong time or in the wrong way, or fail to do so when they should.

What, then, are the virtues of character, according to Aristotle, and what are their spheres? Consider the following table:

<i>Virtue</i>	<i>Sphere</i>	<i>Discussion in NE</i>
Courage	Fear and confidence	3.6–9
Temperance	Bodily pleasure and pain	3.10–12
Generosity	Giving and taking money	4.1
Magnificence	Giving and taking money on a large scale	4.2
Magnanimity	Honour on a large scale	4.3
(Nameless)	Honour on a small scale	4.4

Even temper	Anger	4.5
Friendliness	Social relations	4.6
Truthfulness	Honesty about oneself	4.7
Wit	Conversation	4.8

Aristotle also briefly discusses shame, which he says is not really a virtue, and righteous indignation (*NE* 1108a30–b6; 4.9). He devotes the whole of book 5 to justice, and his notorious attempts to force this virtue into his framework fail (1133b29–1134a13). The reason for this should be clear from our discussion above: in the case of justice there is no neutrally characterizable action or feeling which the virtuous man can do or feel at the right time. Books 8 and 9 of *NE* concern another virtue, *philia*, usually translated as 'friendship', though it is in fact wider than this.

(Justice) then, is a problem with the doctrine, and there are more technical difficulties with particular virtues such as courage. But the doctrine of the mean on the whole provides Aristotle with a sound framework in which to discuss and systematize the virtues and vices. The list is interesting, in that it contains nothing corresponding to what we might call benevolence or kindness, a general concern for others at large. Some have said that this demonstrates the size of the cultural gap between pre- and post-Judaean-Christian societies. But one might suggest that the core of the virtue of benevolence is located elsewhere by Aristotle, primarily in the virtue of friendship. The Aristotelian virtuous man may perhaps be excessively concerned with 'the fine', but this does not make him heartless. It has to be admitted that the notion of general benevolent concern for humanity at large does not play any significant role in Aristotle's ethics. But it must also be admitted that general benevolent concern, as opposed to concern for those with whom the agent has some personal connection, plays a smaller part in modern ethical life than many of us like to admit.

What is the relation of the intellectual virtues to the mean and to the virtues of character in general? Aristotle begins his discussion of the intellectual virtues in such a way that it sounds as if he is agreeing with those who find the doctrine of the mean to be empty (*NE* 6.1). Telling someone that the right action is in a mean between two extremes, he says, is rather like telling an ill person to take the drug the doctor would prescribe. But we should remember here Aristotle's insistence that the listener to his lectures should have a basic grasp of the elements of ethics. Someone who has that can then use it as a starting-point for reflection on the nature of the virtues, and consequent character change. I might, for example, reflect upon the large number of times I have been angry with students over the last few weeks, and follow Aristotle's advice to steer myself in the opposite direction in future.

But really getting it right on every occasion, Aristotle says, will require that one's feelings and actions are in accordance with 'correct reason' (*orthos*

logos). This is not a matter of habituation, but something more intellectual, and will require the possession of the intellectual virtue of practical wisdom.

Practical wisdom is broad, and includes an ability not only to find the right means to certain ends, but the ability to deliberate properly about which ends are worthy of pursuit (NE 6.8-9; 6.12). The person with practical wisdom, then, will have the correct understanding of happiness, and the role of virtue in constituting happiness, and be able to apply his understanding in everyday life.

But practical wisdom is not like, say, mathematical ability, which can be acquired early and operates according to the application of certain explicit rules. Practical wisdom, like the virtues of character, develops with experience, and has as much to do with seeing the salient features of certain situations, and acting and responding appropriately in the light of them, as with any ability for explicit deliberation. Some have seen Aristotle's discussion of practical wisdom as disappointing, perhaps because they hope for some explicit and detailed ethical rules by which to live. Aristotle does offer some pretty specific rules – such as that you should ransom your father from pirates rather than repay a debt to someone (NE 1164b33-1165a2) – and the general rules 'be virtuous' and 'aim at the mean' are of course always in the background. But Aristotle is insistent, and surely correct, that one cannot learn virtue solely from philosophical books or lectures.

Practical wisdom, since it involves seeing in the right way, is a necessary condition for possessing any virtue. And if in any particular case you have the general capacity to see what is right and do it, you will have it in all cases. So, though Aristotle is prepared to distinguish one virtue from another, he is not ready to allow that one can possess one virtue and lack another (NE 6.13). One cannot, for example, be generous and cowardly. One important reason for Aristotle's holding this view is his thought that virtue requires getting it right. For vices can distort the deliverances of any disposition, however close it may be to being a full-blooded virtue. In a situation where generosity required conquering fear, the person might not do the generous thing, and that would mean that he lacked the virtue. Good intentions are not enough.

ARISTOTLE AND CONTEMPORARY ETHICS

Aristotle's ethics were immensely influential. They were the focus of Hellenistic ethics, and were also extremely important in the Christian tradition, most strikingly in the work of Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-1274). Of course, it was not only the Aristotelian ethics which were significant during this period, but the whole Aristotelian world view. With the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century, however, Aristotelian science began to decline in importance, and the ethics met with the same fate. In the place of

Aristotelian ethics developed modern systems of ethics, many of them employing notions alien to Aristotelian thought. The two main developments were Kantian ethics, according to which morality is a universal law of reason, and individual rights are sovereign, and utilitarian ethics, according to which one should act so as to produce the greatest amount of happiness.

In science, the move away from Aristotle was not complete. In his famous work on the circulation of the blood, for example, William Harvey refers to Aristotle more than to any other thinker. And the same is true in ethics: the Kantian emphasis on reason in ethics cannot help but remind us of the function argument (see p. 115) and practical wisdom, while utilitarian concern for happiness has its roots in Greek eudaimonism. But over the second half of the twentieth century, there has been a self-conscious attempt by certain philosophers to return to a more explicitly Aristotelian ethics. This movement began in 1918, with the publication of Elizabeth Anscombe's article 'Modern Moral Philosophy' [4.46]. Anscombe, following Schopenhauer, argued that modern ethics revolved around notions of legalistic obligation which made little sense in the absence of a divine lawgiver. She suggested that philosophers desist from moral philosophy, and turn to psychology. 'Eventually', she claimed, 'it might be possible to advance to considering the concept "virtue"; with which, I suppose, we should be beginning some sort of a study of ethics' (Anscombe [4.46] 15).

This was the beginning of what has come to be known as 'neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics'. The 'neo-' here is, however, rather important. For certainly these writers have not sought to revive Aristotelian ethics. Indeed it might be argued that the differences between their views and those of Aristotle are such that the link between them is only as strong as the link between Aristotle and Kant or Aristotle and the utilitarians.

Virtue ethicists, like Aristotle, begin with the notion of *eudaimonia*, or human flourishing, considering the agent and his life as a whole, rather than concentrating on individual and isolated right and wrong actions. But this is not a difference in substance between them and the Kantians and utilitarians, for these latter theorists can also offer an account of the good life and moral character. It is just that often they have not bothered.

No modern writer has adopted the strong Aristotelian view that happiness consists only in virtuous activity. Indeed many modern virtue ethicists, such as Philippa Foot [4.48] or Alasdair MacIntyre [4.50], are sceptical about objective accounts of the human good. Even those who are less sceptical, such as Rosalind Hursthouse [4.49], tend to see the virtues as instrumental to human flourishing, understood independently from the virtues themselves, thus taking the 'best bet' strategy we mentioned above.

Another important difference between Aristotle's eudaimonism and that of most modern writers is his apparent acceptance of egoism, the view that reasons justifying action must ultimately rest on the agent's own self-interest. There is nothing in the Aristotelian corpus to suggest other than that

Aristotle's aim was to offer to his listeners an account of the best life for a human being in order that they might pursue it for themselves. The idea of reasonable self-sacrifice for others is quite absent, since there is no gap between self-interest and the virtues (NE 9.8).

Perhaps the most direct Aristotelian influence can be seen in the writings of John McDowell [4.51], David Wiggins [4.54], and others who stress the notion of a sensitivity to the morally salient features of situations as constituting the heart of virtue and morality itself. But even here the importance of 'mother wit' in Kant, or the role of perception in the deontological intuitionism of W.D. Ross (1877-1971), himself a great Aristotelian scholar, should not be forgotten. The utilitarian tradition, it is true, has tended to place more emphasis on calculation than moral perception, but again this is a matter of contingency. Utilitarians need some account of practical wisdom or moral judgement as much as any other moral theorist.

The above discussion is intended to suggest that the distinctions drawn between different schools in modern ethics are not as precise or useful as many believe them to be. Ultimately, the real difference between one moral philosopher and another lies in how they tell us to live, and the reasons they give for living in that way. No one now speaks ordinarily of *megadopsuchia* (usually translated as 'magnanimity', but not meaning what is now meant by that term), which for Aristotle was the crown of the virtues (NE 4.3). The magnanimous man thinks himself worthy of great things, and has one concern above all others: honour. He stirs himself only when some great achievement is at stake. There is indeed much to be learned from Aristotle's account of the virtues, but his moral ideal is a long way from 'neo-Aristotelian' modern writers, particularly those who emphasize the virtue of care for the vulnerable.

Most importantly, perhaps, we should remember the political context in which Aristotle was writing (see below). His virtues are intended for fourth-century Athenian noblemen, inhabiting a city-state with a population of tens of thousands rather than of millions. This is not to say that Aristotle is any kind of relativist, grounding his account of virtues in whatever social context they were to appear in. Rather, he believed that the Greek polis was, universally, the best form of human society, and that the virtues that it made possible were largely the reason for this. For this reason, it is dangerous to draw conclusions about what Aristotle would have thought about how individuals should live in modern societies entirely different in their details and general nature from the Greek polis. Perhaps the correct way to approach Aristotelian ethics is not to claim him as an ally in or authority for one's own views about modernity. Rather, he should be read carefully and sensitively, with an understanding of historical, social and political context, as one of the best sources of insight into the human ethical condition available to us.

THE POLITICS

Trevor J. Saunders

INTRODUCTION

It is a fair test of a political philosopher to ask him to describe what in his view is the best form of communal human life. Aristotle would give you this reply: 'It is to live as a citizen in that special kind of aristocracy which I describe in my *Politics*, in what you moderns call "books" 7 and 8. You and your fellow-aristocrats would not be numerous: you would be able to address them all in a single gathering. The territory of your state would be correspondingly modest. Your citizenship would be granted you on the strength of your high moral and political virtue, which you would have acquired as a result of systematic exposure to a carefully contrived programme of private and state education. The other members of your household would be your wife, children, servants, and slaves. Your resources, ample but not great, would come from your land; but you would not need to bother your head much about that, as your slaves would do the work. Trade and handicrafts would be confined to free men who are not citizens; for such people, though necessary to the state, would not be *parts* of it. You would spend much of your time on leisure activities – not just play, but rather the serious intellectual and cultural pursuits of what you would now call a gentleman. Why do I think this the ideal life? Pray read the rest of my *Politics*.¹

Taking the Master's advice calls for effort. Though of the highest importance and influence, the *Politics*, unlike the *Nicomachean Ethics*, is a rather ragged work. Aristotle employs his usual elegantly plain style, which can at times be spare to the point of sketchiness and even obscurity. But that is not the real bother. Though substantial stretches of the text are structured and beautifully written wholes, there are frequent puzzles in the detail: unclear references back and forth, enquiries left incomplete, and sudden changes of subject-matter and standpoint. To reconstruct Aristotle's full thought on a given subject, it is usually necessary to thumb through the entire work and collect the relevant passages – which are not always consistent with each other. The abundant references given below are designed to speed the reader's thumb. (Unless otherwise stated, all references are to the *Politics*.)

On the global scale too, the structure and sequence of the eight books seem strange, and have prompted many commentators into reordering them in accordance with *a priori* views about the natural disposition of their

contents, or with theories about Aristotle's philosophical development. The debate was substantially enriched by Jaeger in 1923 ([4.84] 259-92), who argued powerfully for an Aristotle gradually freeing himself from Platonic political assumptions and methods, an emancipation traceable in various strata of the text. But this controversy, though lively, has proved inconclusive, and 'genetic' analyses are not now in vogue. It is perfectly reasonable to do what most interpreters now do in practice, that is take the *Politics* as it comes, and to assume that however Aristotle composed the parts, he intended to present the ensemble as we have it, failing only to tighten the nuts and bolts.²

Nevertheless, a brief survey of three of the more conspicuous difficulties of structure will serve to provide some idea of the contents of the work as it has come down to us. (1) Book 2, on certain theoretical utopias (notably Plato's *Republic* and *Laws*), and on three historical states (including Sparta) in fine repute, looks as if it may have been written first, as the standard Aristotelian review, at the start of a work, of his predecessors' contributions to the subject in hand. Why then does book 1, a strongly sociological analysis of the state and its parts, and philosophically the richest book of all, precede it? Does it contain theoretical groundwork of which Aristotle realized the need only when composing the rest of the *Politics*? (2) Why is the closing sentence of 3, a book devoted to questions of political power in the various constitutions, similar to the opening one of 7, on the ideal state? Both speak of the need to examine the 'best' constitution. But books 4-6 are full of historical analysis, and advice on the reform of existing and imperfect states. So have they been inserted between 3 and 7 by some clumsy editor? Even if they have been, the implications for our understanding of the *Politics* as a whole are mysterious. (3) Why does book 8, the last, break off in mid-discussion? It is unlikely that Aristotle simply became bored with political theory, since on his own showing knowledge about the working of the state, *politikê epistêmê*, is the supreme, all-embracing knowledge, that is of how to achieve the highest human good (NE 1.2, *Politics* 1.1 ad init.). Perhaps he died pen in hand. If that is so, it suggests that books 7 and 8 are not his early thoughts, inspired by Plato-style idealism, but the genuine conclusion and practical aspiration of the entire work.

Perhaps the best advice to give a reader of the *Politics*, particularly a new reader, is to be aware of such specialized academic problems, for they can affect interpretation, but not to become obsessed by them. For in spite of variations in detail, Aristotle's political philosophy is clearly a fundamentally consistent whole, underpinned by firm and constant philosophical foundations.

NATURE

In 1.2, utilizing a long-established optimistic and progressivist tradition in Greek historical anthropology, Aristotle tells the following story. Civilization has advanced sequentially, through three 'associations', *koinōniai*:

- 1 household (*oikos*), formed of the two primitive 'associations' of man-woman, master-slave;
- 2 village (*kōmê*), formed of several households;
- 3 state (*polis*), formed of several villages.

The naturalness of each association is stressed heavily. Man-woman: they have a natural urge to breed; master-slave: natural ruler and natural ruled; household: formed by nature for everyday purposes; village: 'by nature to an especial degree, as a colony of a household - children and grandchildren'; state: it exists by nature, for all men have a natural impulse towards such an association.

Each stage incorporates its predecessors, and brings an increase in material resources, presumably because of increasing specialization of function and opportunities for exchange of goods and services. In part, material comfort and security are what all these associations are for. But at stage 2 Aristotle's ulterior preoccupation begins to emerge: the village is formed for 'other than daily purposes'; and at stage 3 the state, which is a 'complete' association and totally self-sufficient, 'came into being for the sake of life', *zên*, but exists for the sake of the good life, *eû zên*. By 'self-sufficiency' Aristotle means here not merely an assured supply of all necessary material goods from domestic or foreign sources, but the opportunities afforded by the complex demands of life in a polis for the full exercise of a man's natural potentialities for rational conduct in conformity with the moral virtues (on these, see pp. 118-22 above). Such conduct both leads to, and is, human 'happiness', *eudaimonia*; it is the 'good' life for which the state exists (cf. 7.1, 13, NE 1097b1 ff.). Hence, in Aristotle's celebrated formulation, man is a *phusê politikon zôion*, 'an animal (fit) by nature for (life in) a polis' (cf. 1278b.15 ff.). For this animal is unique in possessing reason and speech, and a capacity for shared moral values (1253a7-18). Hence again, a man who does not live and act in a state is a man indeed, but no more a full man, i.e. a fully functional man, than a hand made of stone is a functional hand. He is functionally stunted, and the measure of happiness he attains is limited.

This latter point is worth developing. To Aristotle, it is no more a matter for surprise or indignation that one man should by nature be better equipped than another for acquiring virtue and thereby achieving happiness than that he should be by nature stronger physically, with a greater potential for (say) weight-lifting. 'Happiness' is on a sliding scale: one can have more

or less of it (1328a37-40, 1331b39-1332a7). Hence he has an immediate answer to the objection that vast numbers of people ('barbarians', i.e. non-Greeks) live and apparently flourish in societies other than Greek *politeis*. That they are happy up to a point, he would concede; that they are fully so, he would deny. In a Greek polis, did they but know it, they would be happier (cf. 7-7). Happiness is not, or not only, a subjective feeling of satisfaction in achievement (see p. 110): it is an objective and definable state of affairs, of human flourishing, that is to say rational activity in accordance with the virtues; for this is man's natural function (see p. 115).

Further objections spring up, as many as the heads of the Hydra. Several, centring on the notion of 'function' in human behaviour, have been explored already (pp. 115-16). In addition: (1) Even in terms of Aristotle's own natural philosophy, in which the paradigm of the 'natural' is biological growth (see *Physics* 2.1), the state is hardly natural. It is much more like an artefact, full as it is of elaborate constitutional and social contrivances that certainly do not develop naturally, as an embryo develops naturally into an adult member of its species, of its own accord, given all facilitating conditions (see Keyt [4.86]). (2) But even if we grant that the development from primitive pairings through household and village to state may properly be conceived on a biological model, in virtue of natural urges to develop such associations, difficult questions confront us: for example, can the same analysis be applied to a process involving many individuals in many changing relationships as is applied to a single individual's physical growth into an adult? (3) More generally, how far ought we to privilege certain human characteristics, or certain patterns of human social behaviour, on the strength of either parallels to them or differences from them in the characteristics or behaviour of animals?³

Perhaps the best we can do for Aristotle is to extend the notion of 'natural' to embrace anything which is the product of man's natural faculties, conspicuously reason, and which conduces to his happiness; and indeed Aristotle himself at times speaks in this way (for example 1279a8-13, 1287b36-41; on his 'political naturalism', see Miller [14.91], 27-66). But as we shall see, he is prepared to be very specific indeed about 'anything'; for human institutions are, he believes, capable of normative assessment. Some things conduce to happiness, some do not. Human skill should follow and supplement nature (cf. 1337a1-3). Consequently, relativism in social and political values and institutions is to be firmly rejected. No doubt all sorts of theoretical and practical controversies are possible; but in the end they are capable of definitive solution by reference to the fulfilment of men's natural capacities, to the *sort of being* a man naturally and peculiarly is.

Aristotle's natural teleology has three important consequences for political theory and practice. (1) A man in a state of nature is not someone living in simple primitive 'happiness' in a nudist camp; nor is he Hobbes'

natural man, naked and shivering in the wind before achieving such protection and comfort as society affords him. Rather, to be in a natural condition is to be a functionally fulfilled member of a polis: one goes not back to nature, but forward to it.⁽²⁾ Though the state is indeed a device to ensure peace and protection, its role is not simply to hold the ring in a minimalist or merely contractual manner, between socially or commercially contesting individuals or groups (3.9). It should take comprehensive care of every department of life, economic, social, political, military, private, public, secular, religious; in particular, it should take extreme pains to ensure the proper moral formation of its members (8.1)(3). Despite that, the state is not a super-entity, with interests and purposes independent of, or superior to, those members' happiness; for happiness is ultimate: men can have no higher aim (see p. 114); and that aim is the 'common task', *koinon ergon*, of the association, *koinônia*, which is the state. The polis is therefore essentially a communal and co-operative enterprise, depending heavily on reciprocal services and mutual benefits. These benefits are to be won not by men conditioned or brainwashed into being social and political robots, but by men with discretion founded on *phronêsis*, practical wisdom (on which see pp. 121-2).

Hence, although Aristotle has much to say about the ways in which one section of a polis may pursue its own interests at the expense of other parts, or of the whole, he never confronts directly the issue so vital to us in this century, of 'totalitarianism', the subjugation of the interests of the individual and of subordinate organizations to the interests of the state itself, as a super-entity. The point of the thesis at 1253a18 ff., which sounds so alarming, is that the state is 'prior by nature' to household and individual, is that while the state can flourish without any particular individual, no individual can attain 'happiness' without it, i.e. when he is not fully functional as one of its citizens. Aristotle drives no wedge between the interest of the individual and those of the state: to him, a totalitarian polis would not be a polis at all.⁴

AIMS AND METHODS

How then does Aristotle tackle the political theory and practice of his day? Four strands in his text are readily discernible:

- 1 Theoretical fixed points: a technique of analysis based on a cluster of such concepts as *nature*, *function*, *virtue*, and *happiness*, deployed teleologically.
- 2 Practical fixed points: the institutions of the 'best' state, in which the concepts of 1 are instantiated in as feasible a form as possible (1328b35-9).

But the best state does not exist (though it could). So the great bulk of Aristotle's discussion is taken up with:

- 3 Description and analysis of the (mistaken) theoretical underpinning and actual practices of less-than-ideal constitutions or states existing or merely proposed, with comment which at times becomes exceedingly censorious. Aristotle is nevertheless prepared to judge a state or constitution in the light of its success or failure in achieving its 'hypothesis', i.e. its own political aims and standards, as in book 2 *passim*; for such standards can have some limited merit. In general, he has considerable respect for *endoxa*, common reputable opinions (cf. pp. 111–12, and his handling of the controversies about slaves and about justice in constitutions, pp. 137 and 131–2).
- 4 Implicit in (3), recommendations for correcting existing theory, and for improving existing practice in order to make it approximate more closely to the ideal; for the 'statesman' (citizen active in state affairs, see p. 132 and n. 11 below) has a 'duty of care' even to inferior constitutions (4.1).⁵

These four strands mesh in complex ways; and the abundant historical detail which Aristotle cites (sometimes with impressive induction) as evidence for his arguments lends his text both colour and authenticity.⁶ In short, he is at once philosopher, don, critic, data-processor, and political reformer.

APPLICATIONS

Admittedly, Aristotle as a political reformer is not a familiar figure. There is a common idea that it was Plato who was the reformer *par excellence* (consider only the Philosopher-Kings of his *Republic*), whereas Aristotle stuck more closely to the realities of Greek life – so closely, in fact, as make his political philosophy a mere rationalization of the status quo. This is a half-truth at best. Aristotle's conceptual apparatus, in which nature is central, is capable of yielding the most radical political ideals, very much askew to the standard assumptions of his day. I take four examples.

1 *Constitutions and citizenship*

Aristotle defines a 'constitution', *politeia*, in terms of a power-structure which embodies and promotes the state's social aims and moral values. It is 'an ordering (*taxis*) which states have concerning their offices (*archai*) – the manner in which they have been distributed, what the sovereign (*kurios*) element of the constitution is, and the purpose (*telos*) of each association (*koinônia*, i.e. state)' (1289a15–18, cf. 1.1, 1293a34–b1). His typology of constitutions contains therefore both a formal element and a moral element:

the identity, number, and economic status of the sovereign rulers, and the character of their rule. It is also interlarded with lengthy analyses of the social, economic, and psychological factors which make for the preservation and destruction of the various constitutions. The texts are lavish but scattered, mainly in 3.6–18 and books 4–6. For a new reader, 3.6–8 and 4.2 form the best introduction, followed by the 'chief texts' listed below.

Straight or correct constitutions, operating in the common⁷ interest:

Kingship, *basileia*: a species of 'rule by one' *monarchia*. Aristotle considers this to be ideally the best constitution, provided that a monarch of supreme virtue and political wisdom is available; but he never is. Chief texts: 3.13–18; 5.10, 11.

Aristocracy, *aristokratia*: 'power of the best', *aristoi*. Rule by few, typically of noble breed, wealthy, cultured, and virtuous. Chief texts: 3.18, 1289a30–3; 4.7–8; 5.7.

Polity, *politeia* (awkwardly: this is also the general word for 'constitution'): rule by many, specified variously. For there appear to be three forms: (i) rule by heavy-arms bearers; (ii) a 'mixed' system, judiciously combining elements of oligarchy and democracy; (iii) rule by a large middle class, i.e. persons who are neither rich nor poor, and who have only moderate appetites for wealth and power; this composition of a state is 'by nature' (1293b27–8).⁸ Chief texts: 1263b26–9; 3.7; 4.7–9, 11, 13; 1307a5–33.

Bent or deviated constitutions, operating in the interests of the rulers only:

Tyranny, *tyrannis*: a species of 'rule by one' *monarchia*. Chief texts: 4.10; 5.11, 12.

Oligarchy, *oligarchia*: 'rule by few'; *oligoi*, typically wealthy. Chief texts: 4.4, 6; 5.1, 6, 9, 12; 6.6, 7.

Democracy, *démokratia*: 'power of the people', *dēmos*. Rule by many, typically poor. Chief texts: 1284a17 ff.; 4.4, 6, 9, 12; 5.1, 5; 1310a22 ff.; 6.2, 4.

On restricted democracies, see 1274a11 ff., 1281b21 ff., 1297b1 ff.

This schema, which has antecedents in Plato and elsewhere, is fundamental to the entire *Politics*; and it is subject to numerous and at times bewildering refinements and elaborations, which reflect the extraordinary variety of Greek political practice. But Aristotle gives us more than static description of complex constitutional facts: he provides a dynamic, psychological analysis of how they come about. The root cause, he claims, is varying perceptions of 'the equal' (*to ison*), and 'the just' (*to dikaion* 5.1 ff.). Democrats argue that since they are equal in one respect, free birth, they ought in justice to be equal in all, i.e. political power; oligarchs believe that since they are unequal, i.e. superior, in one thing, wealth, they ought in justice to be unequal in all,

i.e. they ought to have greater political power. When political facts collide too sharply with these political beliefs, civil strife, *stasis*, can break out; hence the frequent modifications to, and indeed complete changes of, constitutions. Aristotle, by contrast, thinks that the sole proper claim to political power is political virtue, that is the practical ability to further the purposes for which the polis naturally exists (3.9, 12, 13); and in this endeavour political power ought to be distributed differentially to different degrees of political virtue, more to more, less to less,⁹ though both wealth and numbers have some contribution to make (3.11; 1283a16–22, b27–34; 1293b34 ff., 1309a4–7). By ensuring that constitutions are not extreme, and by cultivating the political beliefs and habits of the population in the spirit of the existing constitution, a measure of stability can be won (1260b8 ff., 1310a12 ff.). Finally, the rule of impartial law is essential to the very existence of a constitution (1291b19–1292a38).

Aristotle's functional analysis of entitlements to rule dovetails with his functional definition of a citizen (3.1–2): 'he who shares in deliberative and judicial office'.¹⁰ That is, a citizen, *politês*, is one who is active in 'running the affairs of the polis', *politaiomenos*, in accordance with its constitution, *politeia*, as a 'statesman', *politikos*.¹¹

From all this it follows, in Aristotle's view:

- i that across the entire range of constitutions, the number of citizens strictly conceived varies sharply: few or very few in oligarchies and aristocracies, many or very many in democracies;¹²
- ii that in all oligarchies and in some democracies (those with some property-qualification for citizenship) there will be variable numbers of native free adult males who are not citizens in the full sense, but only equivocally (like women and children, cf. 1278a4–5); slaves and foreigners, of course, qualify in no sense;
- iii that in deviated constitutions, although the citizen-body, *politeuma*, operates in its own interests, it may, and prudentially should, pay some attention to the interests of others. The few rich, if sovereign, should not 'grind the faces of the poor', and the numerous poor, if sovereign, ought not to 'soak the rich' beyond endurance; for either excess may lead to *stasis* (1295b13 ff.; 4.12; 1308a3 ff., 1309a14–32, b14–1310a12; also 5.11, on tyrannies);
- iv that there is a distinction to be made between the good citizen and the good man. The former is befitted by his personal sympathies, virtues, and attainments to be a citizen under a particular imperfect constitution; the latter is befitted by his to be a citizen under the 'best' constitution (cf. 8.1). The virtue of the former is pluriform, for there are many imperfect constitutions; the virtue of the latter is not only perfect but single, for there is in principle only one best constitution (3.4; 1310a12 ff., cf. NE 1135a3–5);

v that both good citizens and good men exercise their virtue, i.e. that of practical wisdom, *phronêsis*, most fully when ruling; but since they are all equal, and since obviously not all may rule simultaneously, they must take it in turns to rule and be ruled, in some principled manner laid down in the constitution (1279a8 ff., 1332b12 ff.). Their virtue is therefore twofold: to know how to rule and be ruled well; indeed, by engaging in the latter they learn to do the former (1277a25 ff.).¹³

Given, then, that the ideal single ruler does not exist and is never likely to, and that the natural capacity of men for developing virtue and thereby achieving 'happiness' varies widely, it is scarcely surprising that Aristotle, in seeking the 'best' state, should look to some form of aristocracy. For only in an aristocracy are good man and good citizen one and the same person, because the criterion for office-holding is not only wealth but virtue (3.18; 4.7, 8). Aristotle's fundamental intentions are plain: what he wants to see above all in his citizens is education and virtue; for these are at once the conditions of 'happiness' (7.1, esp. 1323b21 ff.; 8.1), and the criteria for the holding of office (cf. 1326b15, 'merit'); and in an aristocracy, by definition, the best (*aristoi*) men exercise power.¹⁴

Nevertheless, Aristotle never calls his 'best' state an aristocracy, perhaps because as aristocracies go it is highly unusual.¹⁵

- i The members of an aristocracy, i.e. its citizens, are typically wealthy. But the members of Aristotle's aristocracy do not value wealth: they are to possess only moderate resources, which are all that is necessary for life; what matters to them is the 'goods of concerning the soul' (7.1, cf. 1.8–10).
- ii The members of an aristocracy are normally few, in relation to the total free adult male population of the state (aristocracy is a kind of oligarchy, 1290a16–17). Yet it is possible, though Aristotle gives no figures, that the restricted level of private resources in his own aristocracy would permit it to be more widely diffused: a few dozen or even a few hundred members look rather too few for his purposes.¹⁶ But it is clear that he would not wish to see any approximation to Plato's diffused aristocracy (Magnaia) in his *Laws*, where the adult male citizens number 5040; such a total, he believes, is outrageously large (1265a10 ff., cf. 7.4). (In many other respects, however, there are marked similarities between Magnesia and Aristotle's best state (Barker [4.71] 380–2).)
- iii According to Aristotle's typology of constitutions, aristocracy is the rule of a few virtuous persons over many non-virtuous, but in the common interest. In his own best state the position seems to be subtly different: the aristocrats' interests are the common interests – simply because there are no other citizens: the aristocrats *are* the state.¹⁷ That is, there is no body of persons other than themselves with a claim on their strictly

political attention. At any rate, Aristotle is quite explicit, indeed emphatic, that all other adult males – agricultural workers (who are preferably to be slaves, 1330a25 ff., cf. 1255b30–40), artisans, and traders (and of course their dependants) – are not ‘parts’ of the state;¹⁸ they are merely its essential conditions. How far this would matter in practice is hard to judge: Aristotle’s aristocrats presumably cannot ignore such people, and have to make some arrangements for their activities and welfare (for example 1331b1–4); and a poor person is not necessarily worse off materially just because he lacks the formal but ambiguous status of ‘citizen’ without the citizen rights of office-holding, etc., except perhaps that Aristotle’s aristocrats can afford to be generous to him less well than historical aristocrats. But there can be no doubt that Aristotle has sharpened the political distinction between citizens and others.

The cultural and artistic activities Aristotle recommends as pursuits for his citizen aristocrats (book 8) look very different from the huntin’-shootin’-fishin’ engaged in by historical landed aristocrats.

Aristotle allocates the civic functions of his best state by age-groups: as a young man, one’s function is to be a soldier, not to hold political office; later, at some unspecified mature age, one exchanges being ruled (exclusively) for the alternation of being ruled and ruling, and deliberates and judges; in old age one assumes a priesthood (7.9; 1332b25–7). This three-fold division is more systematic than common historical practice; for to deprive arms-bearers of office is remarkable, and Aristotle is at pains to justify it (1329a2 ff., 1332b32 ff.); see further Mulgan (14.74), 95–6.

Aristotle’s best state is therefore both like and unlike historical states. It is something of a hot-house plant, nurtured in the rich soil of natural teleology; for all the above conditions are justified, immediately or implicitly, by an appeal to nature.

- i In one way or another, nature provides for most of our needs, in sufficient but not excessive quantities; agriculture is an especially natural source of supply (1.8). To seek to acquire endless wealth is a misuse of our faculties, and so unnatural (1258a8–10).
- ii A small aristocracy is justified on a variety of pragmatic grounds, but notably the danger of a large population making the natural aims of the state hard to achieve because of its sheer size and complexity (7.4–5).
- iii Many free men perform only the lowly tasks of manual work, crafts, and trade, which preclude them from virtuous activity and therefore happiness (1323b21–2), and approximate them to slaves (1260a36 ff., 1278a9–11, 20–1, 1328a37–9); and indeed some men are slaves by nature (1.6).

iv Cultural pursuits promote virtue (1341b11), which is necessary to happiness, our natural aim.

v This sequence follows the dictates of nature: the human body and soul just naturally develop like that – bodily strength when one is young, wisdom when older (cf. 1336b40–1337a3; NE 1094b27 ff.).

2 Trade

One prominent category among the non-citizens of the best state is traders. They are recognized as essential to its economic self-sufficiency, but their activities are kept at arm’s length in an area separate from the leisured pursuits of the citizens (1321b12 ff.; 7.6, 12). Yet there is a paradox here; for in 1.9–10 (taken with NE 5.5) Aristotle pronounces trade to be unnatural.¹⁹ How then can it be both unnatural and essential?

Briefly, Aristotle believes that trade tends to undermine civic order. The key terms in his analysis are acquisition, exchange, proportionality, equality and justice. The natural forms of *acquisition* are (a) from nature (farming, etc.), (b) by exchange, which beneficially irons out unevenness in supply: I breed many pigs, you make many shoes; let us therefore exchange pigs for shoes in a certain *proportion* (6 pairs of shoes for 1 pig, *vel sim.*), or (c) let me purchase shoes from you using money which I have received in the past from someone else for my pigs, and which I have found it useful to keep, as a mere substitute for goods, until I need your shoes. The proportion in which the pigs and shoes are exchanged between us leaves us equal: each of us is in the same economic position after the transaction as before (each of us ‘has his own’, 1132b11–20), and neither can feel aggrieved. So far, so natural: exchange facilitates the economic life of the polis; ‘by proportionate reciprocity the state endures’.²⁰

Trade betrays the purity of this model, and not only or primarily because traders are commonly small-minded persons obsessed with maximizing their monetary profit, since they assume (Aristotle claims) that just as the aim of the art of medicine is unlimited health, the aim of the art of acquisition is unlimited wealth; whereas in truth wealth is not an end but a means to life, and life does not require a vast amount of it (1257b25 ff.). His real point is sharper, and is apparently contained in the cryptic statement that the skill of acquisition from trade ‘is justly censured, since it is not in accordance with nature, but is *from each other*’ (1258b1–2). That is, presumably, the trader’s profit is to the disadvantage of the buyer, who pays more than the ‘proportionate’ value;²¹ he comes off worse, and resents it as an injustice; and injustice in general is, according to Aristotle, precisely the deprivation of that which would enable a person to live a virtuous life, in accordance with his natural potentialities; for such a life demands a certain level of material goods.²² This resentment of injustice can be corrosive of the

social and political structure; for it does not make for harmony, *homonoia*, and friendship, *philia* (NE 9.6).²³ Usury, Aristotle claims, attracts even greater odium than trade; of all modes of acquisition, it is the most contrary to nature: it is 'money born of money'. Trade at least achieves that for which money was invented: the exchange of real goods.

If this reconstruction of Aristotle's admittedly problematical texts is correct, his assessment of trade, like his economic theory as a whole, is driven philosophically, by reference to first principles, the natural purposes of the polis; and it draws support from (what he takes to be) common perceptions about equality and justice. Nevertheless, pioneering and radical though he may be in point of theory, he nowhere recommends radicalism in practice; for clearly the suppression of trade would bring any existing state to a stop, and the remedy for the ills generated by traders would be worse than the disease. In his 'best' state, trade simply slots into place as the imperfect activity of imperfect persons, who are not fully capable of *eudaimonia*, but who are essential to the state even if not 'parts' of it.

How the estates of the aristocrats are to be insulated from trade Aristotle does not say. Presumably their managers would traffic with traders (1255b30-7, 1331a30-b13), and they themselves would not feel resentment concerning profit; they are after all not in a relationship of 'political justice' with persons who are not parts of the polis (cf. NE 1134a25 ff.)

3 Slaves²⁴

From a modern point of view, perhaps the most surprising thing Aristotle says about slavery is that it is a benefit to the slave, *doulos*. This is because his relationship with his master is symbiotic (cf. 1252a24-34). The master has powers of reason, the slave has them only minimally: 'he participates in reason so far as to apprehend it but not so far as to possess it'; he wholly lacks deliberative capacity (and therefore *eudaimonia*, 1280a32; NE 1177a8-9). Presumably this means he can understand the orders he receives, but could not have worked out independently in advance what he should do. His function is manual work, and the performance of essential routine tasks is his benefit to his master, who possesses him as a 'living tool' (NE 1161b4), and who benefits him in turn by controlling his life by reason. In a similarly minimal way the slave possesses enough virtue²⁵ to carry out orders in a willing spirit. Nevertheless, the master who can afford it has little to do with his slaves, and employs an overseer of their work; but he himself should be responsible for inculcating their virtue.

Aristotle's statements about slavery are not always consistent, partly because the several different models (for example master is to slave as soul is to body, or whole to part) by which he attempts to express the essence of slavery and the master-slave relationship seem to have conflicting

implications (cf. Smith (1495)). More crucially, the relationship of mutual benefit sketched above is undercut elsewhere (1333a3-5; NE 1160b30) by a grimly instrumental one, in which apparently the only benefit is to the master; 1278b32-7 tries to marry the two positions. On the other hand, Aristotle frankly admits that the slave's ability (presumably thanks to his minimum rationality and virtue) 'to participate in law and contract' creates the possibility of friendship between him and his master (1255b12-14; NE 1161b4-6); but even here there is a heavy qualification, that the friendship is 'not with slave *qua* slave, but *qua* man'.

Aristotle never questions the justice of the institution itself; but in one complex chapter (1.6), in which he arbitrates in a contemporary controversy about it, he subjects it to sharp restriction. Some people, he reports, assert that slavery is just, on the grounds that what is captured in war belongs to the conqueror; others attack it as unjust, since it is imposed by force. Aristotle thinks both sides are right, and both wrong. Only *natural slaves* - i.e. persons whose natural mental and physical capacities befit them to be slaves - should be *actual* slaves; for that is expedient and just. Hence the defenders of slavery are correct up to a point: natural slaves may be forcibly enslaved (cf. 1255b37-39, 1256b23). Conversely, the attackers are also right in part: those who are not slaves by nature ought not to be enslaved. Aristotle in effect admits that some men are slaves who ought not to be, and vice versa. In his own best state, presumably, only natural slaves will be actual slaves (1324b36-41); but how this is to be contrived he does not say. He apparently assumes that natural slaves will breed natural slaves. Nor does he face the obvious possibility that a naturally 'free' man, *eleutheros*, may become slavish by habituation.

The point is this. By a clear application of natural teleology Aristotle arrived at a view of slavery which, if anyone had ever tried to put it into effect, would have caused uproar; for at least some slaves - those with high natural potential - would have had to be freed, and some free men - those of low natural talent - would have had to be enslaved. Aristotle lacks such practical reforming zeal; but his ideas are dynamite to the basis of contemporary practice.²⁶

4 Women

Aristotle's view of women is in one fundamental and obvious respect the same as his view of slaves; for both are ruled by their natural superiors in point of reason and virtue (1252a31-4, 1254b12-15). Like a slave, a woman needs specific virtues in a form which equips her to fulfil her function (1259b40-1260a24). But the slave needs 'little' virtue, whereas the woman (i.e. the free woman, typically the wife of the free male) needs more: she has to be 'good' (*spondaia*, 'sound', 1260b14-19). Unlike the slave, she possesses

deliberative capacity – but it is ‘without authority’ (1260a13). The precise nature of the deficiency is unclear; but presumably the man possesses deliberative capacity in some stronger or more synoptic form, which entitles him to overrule her choices (cf. Fortenbaugh [4.80]).

There is nothing here to disturb the view of women commonly held by the Athenian male, unless he makes the mistake of treating his wife like a slave (see 1252b4–7). Perhaps more radical in its implications is the remark in 1.12 that a man rules over his wife *politikós*, ‘in the manner of a statesman’, ‘as one statesman rules another’. Yet it is important not to over-estimate the significance of this. ‘Political’ rule is over free and equal persons by turns (see pp. 133–4); but, as Aristotle hastens to explain, a woman is not the equal of a man: she is inferior, and therefore never rules, either in state or in household (except presumably over children and slaves). By *politikós* Aristotle probably means not merely that a man rules his wife with a concern for her welfare, but accepts that in so doing he is one rational agent dealing with another, who needs persuasion, not orders. This is a considerable corrective to any view of women as essentially emotional and witless things (there is plenty of such prejudice on display in Greek literature). At any rate, Aristotle sees an important continuity between a man’s treatment of his fellow-citizens in the public arena and his treatment of his wife in the private.

CONCLUSION

Natural teleology, then, makes Aristotle a far more potent challenger to contemporary ethical values and political practices than he may appear to a reader who merely notices that often enough the teleology endorses them. But even then, it is not intrinsic to natural teleology that it should confer approval on the status quo unquestioningly. For instance, so far from challenging the institutions of the private household and of private property, he vigorously condemns Plato’s proposal to abolish them for his Philosopher-Guardians of the *Republic* (*Politics* 2.1–5). He subjects both to critical examination, and pronounces both conducive to happiness.²⁷

But Aristotle faces three linked problems: (1) He assumes that, in some sense pertinent to the achievement of happiness in activity, the nature of each individual man is the same, variations being deficiencies in the ideal. He cannot accept that someone with (say) a natural bent towards manual work has a nature as effective for achieving happiness as the nature of someone with a natural bent towards politics or philosophy. (2) Even if we grant his assumption, however, deciding precisely what human characteristics or activities are natural can seem arbitrary; and some of his attempts to distinguish them are to say the least more plausible than others (cf. p. 116). (3) Why has nature a special status? Can we not seek to rise above it? Why do we assume that nature is best for us? If we need not assume that, then as Keyt

([4.70], 147) has neatly put it, ‘The bedrock upon which Aristotle’s theory comes to rest is also the rock on which it founders’. Nevertheless, nature as a standard of conduct has a seductive allure: it seems to be sure and fixed, and to offer an unchallengeable alternative to ethical and political relativism, liberalism, and individualism, and in fact to any creed that in principle not merely tolerates but encourages a plurality of values and practices in an ‘open’ society.

It is for this reason that some modern communitarians, for example MacIntyre [4.85], have looked to Aristotle for inspiration and support (cf. p. 123). Now communitarians are a rather various school, but their core belief is that it is essential to the mental health of the individual and to the cohesion of society that the latter should espouse some single moral, social and political tenet, or coherent set of tenets, with a range of reciprocal rights and duties derivable therefrom. For a single tenet (or set) can be shared across a whole society: conflicting tenets cannot (cf. 1253a15–18). For these purposes Aristotle’s natural teleology is ready-made. For one has only to assume a single human nature, and lay out a set of social and political structures and relationships based (allegedly) on what man essentially is. But obviously that singleness does not have to be either ‘natural’ or specifically Aristotelian.

NOTES

- 1 Good discussions of Aristotle’s ‘best’ state are Mulgan [4.74] 78–101, and Huxley [4.82].
- 2 For accessible overviews of the problems of structure see Keyt and Miller [4.70] and Rowe [4.93].
- 3 On the biological dimension in Aristotle’s political thought, see Mulgan [4.92], Kullmann [4.87]; on Aristotle and Darwinian biology, Arnhart [4.75].
- 4 Some crucial texts: 1280b29 ff., 1323b21 ff., 1325a7–10, b23–32, 1332a3–7, 8.1. The whole issue, too large for consideration here, is debated by Barnes and Sorabji [4.77], and by Miller [4.91] 191–251. For related questions of political rights and duties in Aristotle, see in general Everson [4.79], Miller [4.91]; on the resolution of conflict, Yack [4.96].
- 5 1289a1–7. One has to say ‘implicit’ recommendations, because although the purpose of political knowledge is action (*NE* 1094b27 ff.), Aristotle does not on the whole give direct advice to statesmen ‘in the field’ on how to set about tactically the amelioration of an imperfect state or constitution. He sets targets, or approximations to them (cf. pp. 112–13), and shows that policy or practice or situation *a* will achieve them, and *b* will not; and he then assumes that statesmen, after reading the *Politics*, will choose *a* not *b*. But the ‘true’ statesman needs more than empirical rules of thumb: he needs to grasp the first principles of ‘political knowledge’, notably of how politics embraces ethics (*NE* 1.1–2; 1102a5 ff., 10.9; cf. pp. 113, 118).
- 6 For most of his historical evidence he presumably relied on the research reports,

compiled in the Lyceum, of the constitutions of Greek states (see *NE* 1181b17). There were 158 'Constitutions', but only one survives, and only in part: *The Constitution of the Athenians*.

- 7 For an analysis of Aristotle's application of this slippery adjective, see Miller ([4.91] 191–213).
- 8 The tangled (and controversial) relationships between these three are investigated by Robinson ([4.66b] 99–103), Mulgan ([4.74] 76–7), and Johnson ([4.85] 143–74).
- 9 That is, by 'geometrical' equality (equality for equals, inequality for unequals, [4.85] 132b17–10), not 'arithmetical' equality (for example one man one vote): see Harvey [4.81].
- 10 'Executive' office seems assumed. Aristotle discusses various difficulties in the definitions, which may be passed over here. 'Judging' refers to courts, with or without popular juries; what we would now call 'civil' and 'criminal' cases often had political importance.
- 11 'Statesman' is obviously a bad translation, but it is sanctioned by usage. 'Politician' is misleading, since it suggests professionalism.
- 12 Strictly, a tyrant or king would be the sole citizen; persons delegated to particular duties of ruling would not have authority in their own right.
- 13 There are some problems here, for example (a) What is one to do with one's *phronēsis* when being ruled? (b) Is the reciprocity of ruling and being ruled consistent with Aristotle's preference for an ideal monarchy? (c) What is the relationship between the 'contemplative' life and the 'active' life of a *politikos*? See 7.2–3 and pp. 117–18 above.
- 14 See 7.2–3 and pp. 117–18 above.
- 15 Indeed, Johnson ([4.85] 155–69) argues that the 'best state' is in fact the 'middle' constitution of 4.11. Cf. Huxley [4.81], Kraut [4.66d] 52.
- 16 At any rate, to judge from 1297a25 ff., 1324a23–5, *NE* 1099b18–20. Aristotle is also aware of the practical dangers of a 'shortage of men': 1278a26–34, 1299a31–b13, 1326b2–3; cf. 1297b26; but contrast *NE* 1171a6–8. (Greek *poiesis* were in size much more like our towns or even villages than like our cities; Athens, which had c.30,000 adult male citizens in the fourth century, was 'off the scale'.)
- 17 1323a34–5: 'for us/for our purposes' (i.e. the best state) 'all the citizens share in the constitution.' But artisans etc. do not so share; therefore they are not citizens, even in a technical attenuated sense – or so it seems.
- 18 7.9. It is this point that formally exempts Aristotle's constitution from the charge of being itself a 'deviated' constitution, as pursuing its members' interests only; for there are no other interests embraced by the state for it to pursue.
- 19 I assume what I argue in Saunders ([4.66a] 88–90), that these three chapters essentially cohere, though they are different in immediate preoccupation. The following two paragraphs are a bald summary of my extended discussion there. For a complete analysis of Aristotle's economics see Meikle [4.90].
- 20 Aristotle assumes, and in *NE* 5.5 tries to identify, a fixed basis of commensurability; but he fails. As a sighing shot, he suggests 'need'.
- 21 Hence, in modern terms, while Aristotle recognizes in a commodity both use-value and exchange-value, and possibly labour-value (1278b5), he fails to acknowledge the value of distribution as a legitimate charge on the buyer.

- 22 *NE* 1099a31 ff., 1129b17–19; on justice, see Miller [4.91], esp. chs 3 and 4.
- 23 On 'political' friendship, i.e. as between one *politikos* or *politikos* and another, co-operating in the purposes of the polis, see Cooper and Annas [4.78].
- 24 Except where otherwise indicated, this section is based on material in 1.3–7 and 13.
- 25 That is, the virtue of being ruled, not of ruling; master and slave possess different virtues, which are not on the same scale; see Saunders ([4.66a] 98–100).
- 26 Schofield ([4.94] 11) puts the same point more gently, in an excellent discussion of the relationship between Aristotle's 'ideology' (in a broadly Marxist' sense of the word) of slavery and his philosophical analysis of it.
- 27 Private property he defends by an intriguing combination of economic, social, and psychological reasons: Irwin ([4.83] 200–25), Miller ([4.91] 321–5), Saunders ([4.66a] 118–20). But he imposes certain conditions, notably a considerable degree of common use: 1263a21 ff., 1329b39–1330a2.

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Prolegomena: 19 Oct

Anselm

: ontological argument for the existence of God.

● Set this in context of relation of faith & reason.

Ask what Anselm is doing in trying to prove existence of God.

Starts with a definition: God is that, than which nothing greater can be conceived. (ttwngc bc)

- ① we understand what the words mean
- ② therefore God as ttwngc bc exists in our minds
(God thus has conceptual existence)
- ③ if the thing of which it is a concept existed in reality, it would be greater
- ④ but God is by definition that than which nothing greater can be achieved
- ⑤ therefore God exists.

● Kant's objection to this:

K especially objected to ③. K said that existence is not a real predicate.

(Aristotle's 10 categories don't include existence).

K said that is because existence is not a real quality.

Norman Malcolm says Anselm can avoid Kant's problem by stating: necessary existence is a real predicate.

Does that prove that God must exist?

Malcolm gives a hint of what Anselm was doing: not so much answering this question, but in thinking what God is like, what dwells on Anselm's mind is that to say that God exists necessarily, means that you cannot think of God as not existing if you think of God at all.

* (Personal interpretation à la Descartes: we think of God, therefore God is!)

^{ko} Slowski: in "The God of faith and reason"

suggests that once you grasp the concept ttwngc bc it is not a question of demonstrating the existence of God.

10/19/28

Kelly Beckham

large piece
of philosophy
of faith & reason

Anterior -
Anselm

Anselm - Ontological Argument for Existence of God

what is Anselm doing in trying to prove existence of God? He is not primarily a philosopher, but on 'project', 'Faith Seeking Understanding'

& 'more than just a motto, but a line means of examining relationship of faith and reason.

Def: God is that ^{than} which nothing greater can be conceived

God

~~is~~

an island -
contingent &
dependent
God-contingent
on nothing.
~~is~~ Not dependent
Not greatest
thing able to
conceive.

1. We understand what the words mean

2. God has as TTWNGECB exists in our minds (God has conceptual existence)

3. If the thing of which this is a concept existed in reality, it would be greater.

4. God is, by definition is TTWNGECB.

5. Therefore, God exists

Objection Kant had to Anselm's argument

- 2 systematic
- 1 biographies
- 1 preface

12 516
9 21
21 39

by saying existence is not a real predicate.

b/c existence is not a quality; it's a given. Not really saying anything special.

Malcolm necessary existence is a real predicate

Anselm - God exists & God exists necessarily
b/c all creation is contingent
God is distinct from ~~almost everything~~
If you can think of God at all,
God must exist

Sokolowski,
The God of Faith & Reason

→ once understand result of Anselm's steps, then realize don't need them

World is an act of grace b/c not necessary

God transcends any language you may use of God

ACQUINAS (1225-74)

What issues or persons responding to

philosophy, services, theology

- harmonizing Plato/Platonism + Aristotle's (revealed wisdom of natural or philosophical wisdom) developed logical system of categories & metaphysics
- gives 5 proofs to the existence of God, regarding to Ari's 4 forms of causation because he wants to prove God as First Principle in all cases
- integrated naturalistic, rational themes from Ari ("the philosopher") & biblical themes from Augustine

(inspired by Ari's Metaphysics)

2. impact or trajectory on modern social ethics

- natural law (but takes truths of revelation as 1st principles; even tho you cannot reason to them, you can reason from them)
- Ari's more optimistic view of human nature
- Descartes is more of a skeptic, rejecting Aquinas' faith as First Principles
- Karl Barth rejects natural theol. because it is philosophical construction; there is no way to reach God from human reasoning; God must come to us.
- commutative justice - ~~unfair~~ practices + trade, civil laws; rewards + punishment
- distributive justice - balancing private + common goods
- teachings on usury & cheating in buying/selling (just price)
- moral virtues can be arrived at by reason & argument
- stress on creating social institutions to maximize our human goodness, and less stress on restraining our sinfulness

3. Theological implications?

His Five Ways (proofs)

- theology can use reason (ie philosophy) to gain limited knowledge of God
- the Unmoved Mover (Ari.) is not worthy of worship; God is beyond ~~governing~~ categories; God is undeniably good, but we can have some limited knowledge
- faith, revelation can be 1st First Principles of reasoning
- we can ^{not} speak of God's essence, but we can (via negation) speak of God's effects & attributes
- natural theology - thru reason we can gain a limited but genuine knowledge of God as God is in essence and as God is related to us without revelation
- process theology - critique 'classical theism' where God is unaffected by anything outside that no relations w/ anything

original sin -

- retains a more positive view of humanity (post-fall) despite its sinfulness

echoes Ari's pos. view of humanity
more neg. view

Wed. 21 October 1998
Springsted lecture

Aquinas' demonstration of how theology can use reason (a response to Aristotle) and proofs for the existence of God

Context:

Anselm addressed God's necessary existence; his distinction from the world – some of these also arise in Aquinas, with some differences, because in the intervening few centuries Aristotle has been "discovered" and introduced in the west. Aristotle allows us to define knowledge and define what it is. By reason alone, Ari is able to reach some conclusions that run contrary to the Xn notion of God (the unmoved mover is not worthy of worship.) So how does philosophy, the use of reason, fit into theology? Aquinas takes up this question first, before tackling the existence of God question. It is question #2 in the Summa Theological.

His 1st question is on "sacred science" which is an introduction to the entire summa, how reason can be used in theology. The belief in God in Xnty is the belief in a singular being. But God is not part of a genus (or larger category of 'god') or species, we cannot study the particulars [influence of Ari's forms]. But Ari gives us forms to use in knowledge, and syllogisms. Reason depends on universal premises and with God being beyond a category, how can we use reason to discuss God? This was Aquinas' first question, he had to address in light of Aristotle.

Aquinas suggests we can use the articles of faith, revelation, as a first principle. Then we can do theology. How can we have knowledge of the sacred? By using syllogisms and reason, reasoning from these first principles, not to them. Aquinas is not a skeptical philosopher like Descartes, who wants to start from neutrality and a blank sheet. Aquinas starts from some givens, the revealed God as first principles. But this is not knowledge (as we cannot know the essence of God, what is behind or in God's being).

But we can reason from this in two ways. 1) Principles of faith serve as first principles of reasoning; 2) and we can reason about the effects. This order is important (many Protestant theologians falsely read him to use the reverse order). He is operating within the context of faith all along. Even Catholics also tend to view Aquinas as Cartesian who only later acknowledges faith. In effect, some like Barth accuse Aquinas as a natural theologian, that one could prove the existence of God. Barth worries about the endeavor to need to prove the existence of God to believe in God.

Having said this, what are Aquinas' proofs for the existence of God? He gives five proofs, (to address Aristotle's forms of causes: formal, final, material, efficient), because he wants to prove that in all cases God is the first principle.

First proof is a proof from motion. (An Aristotelian concept of motion, not Newtonian):
Step 1. Nothing can be moved except by another. *Ex nihilo*. Only something that already has action can set it in motion. In essence, an imparting of reality or actuality to a potentiality. Wood receives heat to then burn. Wood doesn't burn itself. The form which makes it burn is heat (or fire). The activity is the motion of burning which comes from the form heat. [again, He is not taking about motion in terms of pushing i.e. Newtonian, rather going from potentiality to actuality]

Step 2. Things are moving. Motion is an activity, an actuality of a form. [using, responding to Aristotelian concepts of knowledge and reason]

Step 3. The process cannot go on to infinity - So heat exists, what caused its actuality? By continuing this line of questioning, into infinity, one inevitably comes to a first cause. [though most ancient Greeks, including Aristotle, saw the world as eternal, and allowed for this infinite regression. Of course Aquinas, and Xn thinkers do not accept this.]
Step 4. Thus there is a first cause.

But the first cause is not like the first domino that falls or the hand that pushes it. A first cause is something that explains itself.

Aquinas would say that Creation and Xnty are something in time. The world is not eternal. God transcends space and time, a different view than the ancient Greeks. Creating and sustaining are almost the same thing. What a thing is at any given moment is dependent on what action God did before.

Faith and reason. Has it proved the existence of God? But God is a self-contained actuality, this first cause is not contingent (like all other causes). Unlike emanation theory, where the likeness to something tells about that other thing. God, as a first cause is unlike any thing else, by definition. Does this mean we cannot say anything about God, as we do not know anything about its cause. Aquinas says we can still gain insights by its effects, even though we do not know the thing in itself.

The 3rd question [?]. The attributes of God. He talks not about what God is, but what God is not (*via negativa*). God is not matter and form. God's definition is God's existence. There is no form to look at and compare. God is not composed of subjects and accidents. Is God a composite? No. This is part of the concept of simplicity. This line of thinking, after proving the existence of a first cause, we cannot talk about what the first cause is. We cannot describe the essence of the first cause. [this sort of explains what Paul meant, and why he said, that Jesus as God incarnate is foolishness to the Greeks!]

Question #7 - can we know God in Godself; in God's essence. Aquinas says yes! How? Not in the incarnation of Jesus, but "now we see in a mirror darkly, but then we shall God face to face". It has been promised. That is the point of the incarnation, to help lead us back, to follow the path to bring us back to see God. To given the damaged self a way back. Reason alone says we cannot say much about God, but faith allows us in fact to say some things, we can reason about some things from revelation.

After reading week, we'll go more into how Aristotle resolves this *via negativa* conundrum...

VOLUMES

PRIMA PARS

- 1 Theology (1a. 1)
- 2 Existence and Nature of God (1a. 2-11)
- 3 The Names of God (1a. 12-13)
- 4 Knowledge in God (1a. 14-18)
- 5 The Will and Power of God (1a. 19-26)
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- 29 The Old Law (1a2a. 98-105)
- 30 The Gospel of Grace (1a2a. 106-14)

SECUNDA SECUNDÆ

- 31 Faith (2a2a. 1-7)
- 32 Consequences of Faith (2a2a. 8-16)
- 33 Hope (2a2a. 17-22)
- 34 Charity (2a2a. 23-33)

*Human Acts can have
intrinsic & extrinsic
principles*

intrinsic

extrinsic

*- perhaps to reason (rather
than through will)
- directed at the common good
- a means of instruction
by this law
- associated with the gospel*

- 35 Consequences of Charity (2a2æ. 34-46)
36 Prudence (2a2æ. 47-56)
37 Justice (2a2æ. 57-62) Q 61
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Wetmonasterii, die 21 Junii 1963

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01976

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE LIMITED

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Aquinas

10/11/1999 and 10/18/1999 (and additions for comps prep)

Human Acts and Habits, Vices, & Virtues and Law

Does Thomas use an inductive method like Ari (whom he's wrestling with) or is it deductive (which is my first impression)?

Duff:

His method (note similarities to legal argumentation, and professional sales; yet it can be abused if you don't fairly represent the others' view). Duff recommends using this as a teaching method, assigning the *utrum* to MDiv students when righting a paper on ethics. It reminds me of web page FAQ's – Frequently Asked Questions!!!

- *Utrum* (whether) – whether or not it is the case that, (e.g.) abortion is wrong.
- *Videtur* (it seems that) – you give reasonable answers, but finally you disagree (Aquinas then gives his objections)
- *Sed contra* (on the other hand) – a 2nd plausible argument, but still one he disagrees (usually where he quotes Ari) but is close to his view
- *Responsio* (I answer that...) –
- *Ergo* - defending your *responsio* and explaining why you reject the *videtur* and *sed contra*.

How do we analyze Aquinas' ethics:

(Most ethicists have all three of these, but the key is 1) what is their starting point, and 2) which is their emphasis?). Thomas's starting point & emphasis is teleological (Ari's influence), but that brings him to many deontological principles.

Teleology: 1) ultimate goal toward which all things tend (summun bonum, beatific vision); full knowledge of God. 2) Immediate ends wh/are appropriate to the nature a thing. E.g. procreation is the immediate end of sexual intercourse, and uniting husband and wife. Yet unlike JS Mill, he strongly rejects utilitarianism

Deontology: absolute principles do exist, but they arise from ends, e.g. we choose the means but not the end. To Aquinas, the end leads us to the principle. Life, being, has value. This is a different sense of deontological than say Protestant evangelicals, who'd say that the principles arise from the Decalogue or Jesus' teachings. [interesting example of how the typologies are related.

Q: the relationship of how things are in reality, in themselves to how they ought to be. Can social sciences understand the true nature of things? To uncover the end which is appropriate to things, and thereby dictate moral judgment. Duff gets nervous on this, not so much because of the ontological reality but the what it "ought" to be side of things. To Aquinas, truth is truth, wherever you find it. Theology is not the enemy of scientific investigations (although both can be corrupted by sin); truth cannot conflict, i.e. true scientific findings cannot conflict with truth in the Bible. Protestant evangelicals do this too.

Response: – casuistry, e.g. in certain situations the principle no longer applies, not that the principle changes. Can't introduce family planning because it conflicts with the teleologically immediate ends of procreation.

Stacy Johnson notes on Aquinas (Cf. 1/31/00 class)

Plato sees the soul as imprisoned in the body; to Thomas the soul is not pre-existing, or anti-body, they are a composite

Ends: Humans are oriented toward an end: "to know God and love God"

Acts: he distinguishes between acts of human beings (things we do), and human acts (acts which are distinctly human) i.e. free, rational, moral.

- a high role of the virtues; human agency is high; we have the capacity to build up ourselves; risk of Pelagianism

Versus Calvin, where predestination rules; and the role of the self is virtually nil

Gustafson (from *Protestant and Roman Catholic Ethics*, 1978):

Moral choices and judgments ought to be made rationally in the light of moral principles and values which protect and enhance the common good and the realization of the potentialities of individuals.

Gustafson notes that Catholic Moral Teaching has its roots in fulfilling a function which never existed in Protestantism. Ties in to sacraments and penance. Catholic priests had a juridical role, hearing confessions, and having to have standards against which to determine the severity of the sin (venial, mortal). Thus, like a judge, clear guidelines on moral behavior mattered greatly.

Wogaman notes:

- importance of habit: a habit is the disposition of the will; through repetition certain kinds of actions become more automatic, though they remain acts of the will and not involuntary natural forces determining the will
- virtue – a virtue is the disposition of the will to choose means that are appropriate to that ultimate end
- cardinal virtues: developed by human actions; all other virtues known to philosophers fall under them;
- theological virtues – developed by God's action; they are divinely revealed not reasoned
- the ultimate telos is eternal happiness through the contemplation of God
- the end of society is the common good in which the good of each is the good of all
- social ethics – saw a hierarchically ordered society in which each is to fulfill his function and serve the other

Located in:

Vol. II (*Man and The Conduct of Life*) [Vol. I is *God and the Order of Creation*]

Summa Theologica, First Part of the Second Part

XI. Human Acts (QQ. 6-21)

XII. Habits, Vices, and Virtues (QQ. 49-89)

XII. Law (QQ. 90-108)

XI. Human Acts (QQ. 6-21) [on human acts and passions] *- intensive*

Human agency... the human as moral actor.

- St. Thomas Aquinas, Ralph McInerney, Univ of Notre Dame, 1982 (1977). See especially his essay on "Human Agency" [order this]
- The goal or telos is to have union with God
- His pattern throughout: Reason takes us only so far, eventually always need grace, and revelation. Reason is what sets us apart from animals.
- The context does matter, but the telos is constant

VI. On Voluntary and Involuntary Acts

225- human acts as the means to happiness

225- first consider what morals are universal, then move to the particular [deductive! opposite of Ari who starts with the particular]

228- yes, human acts are in part voluntary, there is a human will that the first mover allows to have agency, with some knowledge of the end

230- *voluntary action proceeds from the will*

236f- ignorance can cause an involuntary lack of action of the will

VII. On the Circumstances of Human Acts

239- our intellectual knowledge proceeds from the more known to the less known [deductive! Contra Ari]

244- acts are properly called human inasmuch as they are voluntary; the motive and object of the will is the end.

IX. On that which moves the Will

258- *God moves man's will, as the Universal Mover, to the universal object of the will, which is the good. And without this universal motion, man cannot will anything. But man determined himself by his reason to will this or that, which is a true or apparent good. Nevertheless, God sometimes moves some specially to the willing of something determinate, which is good; as in the case of those whom He moves by Grace.*

X. On the Manner in which the Will is moved

263- it is in the power of the will not to will desire, or not to consent to concupiscence

XII. On Intention

273- It is the will which moves all other powers of the soul to the end... therefore it is evident that intention, properly speaking, is an act of the will

XII. On Choice, which is an Act of the Will in Relation to the Means to the End

285- whether man chooses of necessity or freely? Man does not choose of necessity. For man can will and not will, act and not act... the reason for this is found in the very power of reason, for the will can tend to whatever the reason can apprehend as good.

[key phrase in all this is, "an act of the will"; Aquinas sees most things as being possible as an act of the will (in relation to the means to the end)... or an act of the will in accordance with reason... e.g. choice, consent, use, command,]

XIX. On the Goodness and Malice of the Interior Act of the Will

335- Good and evil are essential differences of the act of the will. For good and evil pertain essentially to the will; just as truth and falsehood pertain to reason..

338- it is from eternal law, which is the divine reason, that human reason is the rule of human will, from which the human will derives its goodness.

XII. Treatise on Habits, Vices, & Virtues (QQ. 49-89) – intrinsic principles of acts

366- he considers the *intrinsic principles* (power and habit) and *extrinsic principles* of human acts. Virtues and vices and other like habits are the principles of human acts;.

XLIX. On Habits in General, as to their substance

367, 373- a habit is a disposition in relation to a thing's nature or operation, which is the end of nature

LV. On the Virtues, as to their Essence

412- habits are divided into good and bad; good habits are virtues, bad habits are vices and sins.

413- virtue implies a perfection of power.

LVII. On the Distinction of the Intellectual Virtues

429- Virtues are distinguished between 1) *intellectual virtues*, 2) *moral virtues*, 3) *theological virtues*.

443- to do a good deed, reason must be well disposed by means of a habit of *intellectual virtue* (reason – wisdom, science, understanding, prudence; the part of the soul that is rational by essence), but also that his appetite be well disposed by mean of a habit of *moral virtue* (appetitive part of the soul, passions; the part of the soul that is rational by participation).

LXI. The Cardinal Virtues

467- *theological virtues* are above man, hence they should be called not human, but super-human or divine virtues.

468- there are four: *prudence* (reason, where the will/power is ordered by reason), *justice* (the right ordering of relationships and distributions), *temperance* (controlling the passions), and *fortitude* (courage; resisting the impulse to turn away due to fear or toil).

469- these virtues are found chiefly in certain acts and passions

LXII. The Theological Virtues

476- they complement our nature, helping to make our happiness complete. Man cannot obtain these alone. Called theological virtues because they 1) direct us to God, 2) they are infused in us by God alone, 3) these virtues are only made known to us by divine revelation i.e. Holy Scripture.

477f- theological virtues are *faith*, *hope*, and *charity* (1Cor 13:13)

discussion of

The Gifts (LXVIII) – the source; and

The Beatitudes (LXIX) the end, happiness

The Fruits of the Holy Spirit (LXX)

LXXI. On Vice and Sin in Themselves

560- contrary to virtue, but in different respects: *sin* is opposed to virtue according as the latter is productive of a good work; *malice* according as virtue is a kind of goodness; *vice* is opposed to virtue properly as virtue, i.e. not befitting its nature

LXXII. On the distinction of Sins

Omission/commission; spiritual (turning from something)/carnal (turning to something);

LXXIII. *Comparison of Sins*

LXXIX. *Does God cause Sin;*

653- The act of sin is both a being and an act, and in both respects it is from God. But sin denotes a being and an action with a defect. But this defect is from a created cause, viz. free choice, as falling away from the order of the First Cause, viz. God.

Consequently the defect is not reduced to God as its cause but to free choice.

LXXXIV. *Sin, the Cause of Sin*

690- the seven capital vices [i.e. the seven deadly sins]

XIII. Law (QQ. 90-108, 742f) – *extrinsic principles of acts*

Law serves as a means of instruction, while grace is God's means of assistance. Law pertains to reason, rather than simply to volition or will. The law is directed at the common good, not private aims.

Law – “a promulgated ordinance of reason for the common good, by one who has charge of the community.” As a concept in moral theology it is divided into *natural* and *positive* law. Positive law is divided into divine positive law (e.g. parts of the OT) and human law (which is divided into civil and canon law).

Natural Law -

Because of the natural law (that portion of eternal law which is available to human reason) emphasis, Catholics are much more successful in their public theology than Protestants. Divine law, revelation, completes natural law (e.g. theological virtues of faith, hope, and love; atonement, resurrection)

God instructs us by His law (in the first place), and in assists us by His grace (in the second place). This section seeks to describe the law in general and its parts. Concerning the law in general: 1) its essence, 2) the different kinds of law, 3) the effects of law.

Roman Catholic Law; 4 kinds of law. Different then Paul, Calvin, Luther. Law to Thomas is about truth and order and cohesiveness. It is an ontological quest to understand the universe and humanity within the universe (in light of newly discovered Aristotle)

1. eternal law – the blueprint of the universe in the mind of God; God's full knowledge; none other than God could know this. The mind or reason of God. Divine wisdom; providence.
2. natural law – that portion of the eternal law, which is accessible to human reason (all human beings, even non-Christians); doesn't contradict eternal but is much more limited. It is ours, as we have reason. It is self-evident; knowable in itself. It is not based on revelation, or knowing Christ as law. A subset of eternal law. Helps us discern between good and evil. Also a gift of grace. (Doesn't necessarily point us to God.) Calvin notes this too but says we see it unclearly, needing spectacles (this was the big debate between Barth and Brunner; did Calvin really have natural law operative; Barth said NO)

eternal law
natural law

- 22.1.1
3. Civil law (human) – laws used to organize human society, but must be consistent with natural law. In fact, it's not really a law. A subset of natural law. Human law arises from the limits of natural law's participation in eternal law.
 4. Divine Law – or, revealed law. (Points us to God.) That part of eternal law which is revealed to us which is beyond reason, yet it does not contradict reason. E.g. God exists could be proven by reason, by natural law, whereas the trinity requires divine law, revelation. Reason only takes us so far, but ultimately revelation is needed. (e.g. saving grace, as compared to grace in natural law; theological virtues of faith, hope, and love; or the incarnation of God in Jesus.) Divine law is necessary for directing human action toward the last end or eternal happiness.

Grace - Thomas is interested in truth, regardless of the source. Natural reason apprehends some truths, but not all truths. Grace builds on nature; it does not contradict nature. Grace is the extrinsic means by which God helps humans do the right. It helps overcome our corrupted nature from the Fall; it helps obtain eternal life; it helps us rise from sin;

Thomas Aquinas

To call the next period of Western history the "Dark Ages" is to interpret it from only one side. It is true that the old Roman Empire fell and that forms of agrarian feudalism came to dominate life. Also, Islam, the greatest post-Christian religion, arose in Arabia and quickly expanded north into Russia, south into Africa, east into Asia, and west into Europe. It created an empire surpassing anything in the West, and it wove together new patterns of thought by combining elements from the Greek classics with the wisdom of the *Qu'ran*. Indeed, it was Islamic scholars who kept the thought of Aristotle alive, and eventually mediated it to the West.

However, one of the ironies of history is that the Islamic expansion and the Christian crusades of the eleventh and twelfth centuries not only threw bloody armies against each other (and in some cases against Jews from both sides) in terrible destruction; they also opened new trade routes between Asia and Europe, stimulated science, allowed scholars to discover new ideas, and began a new epoch in the development of cosmopolitan thinking. Thus this period is better called the "High Middle Ages."

The ideas of Augustine, with their many echoes from Plato and Plotinus, had been kept alive in the monasteries, and they had dominated both biblical understandings and the interpretation of social and ethical issues for half a dozen centuries. As trade, city life, and cultural vitality began to grow again, Aristotle's more naturalistic and empirical methods challenged the consensus. In this context, Thomas Aquinas rendered a new synthesis of biblical and philosophical thought, one that integrated natural, rational themes from Aristotle (whom he calls "the Philosopher") and bib-

lical, theological themes from Augustine, as well as drawing on many others.

Thomas methodically takes up a vast array of issues, poses possible objections, interrogates a series of witnesses from over the ages, and renders a judgment about what is right (lawful). He is convinced that moral issues are not a matter of opinion but rather a matter of correct argument, seen from an integrated and comprehensive point of view that finds its final focus in the ultimate vision of God. Many consider his work to be an intellectual achievement that remains unsurpassed — even by such feats as the integrated theory of physics and cosmology developed in our own time.

Roman Catholic Christians, especially, revere the "angelic doctor" more than others and have found it unnecessary to introduce many innovations in his teachings about economic ethics or the relation of moral philosophy to business until quite recently. In fact, his arguments were used to oppose Protestants in some cases, and as we will see in several subsequent readings, aspects of Thomistic thought are still very much alive. Today many Protestants and non-Christian philosophers also find his arguments among the most cogent of any in human history.

Here we focus on two selections from his greatest work, *Summa Theologica*. One sets forth his distinction between distributive and commutative justice; the other applies the concept of business.

Of Justice, and Of Cheating

Thomas Aquinas

Of Justice, Commutative and Distributive

Here there are four points of inquiry: (1) whether there are two kinds of justice, commutative and distributive; (2) whether each strikes the virtuous mean in the same manner; (3) whether their subject-matter is uniform or manifold; (4) whether in each the just is identified with reciprocal give-and-take.

First Article: Are the Species of Justice Well-Divided into Commutative and Distributive?

The First Point: It would seem not. For that which is harmful to the many cannot be a species of justice, which serves the common good. Now it is harmful to the common good for the goods of the community to be distributed among the many, both because it would exhaust the common resources and because it would corrupt men's morals. Cicero says that *he who receives becomes worse, and ever more ready to receive more*. So therefore distribution is no part of any kind of justice.

2. Besides, we have agreed that the act of justice is to render to each what is his. But in distributing he does not receive what was his, instead there is

newly appropriated to him something which belonged to the community. This is not a work of justice.

3. Again, we have agreed that justice is in subjects as well as in rulers. Yet distribution is the office always of a ruler. Therefore to be distributive is not part of justice.

4. Also, according to the *Ethics*, distributive justice is of community goods. These, however, are the concern of general or legal justice. Consequently distributive justice is a species of that, not of particular justice.

5. Further, being engaged with one or many does not make for a difference of kind in a virtue. Now commutative justice lies in rendering one person his due, distributive in giving something to the many. Therefore they are not different kinds of species of justice.

On the Other Hand, Aristotle assigns two parts to justice, and says that one governs distributions and the other exchanges.

Reply: As we have seen, particular justice is directed towards the private person, who may be compared to the community as a part to a whole. Now with a part we may note a twofold relationship. (First) that of one part to another, and this corresponds to the ordering of private persons among themselves. This is governed by commutative justice, which is engaged with their mutual dealings one with another. (Second, that of the whole to a part, which goes with the bearing of the community on individual persons. This is governed by distributive justice which apportions proportionately to each his share from the common stock. And so there are two species of justice, namely commutative and distributive justice.

Hence: 1. A private person is commended for due moderation in his bountifulness, and blamed for squandering it in waste. So likewise should moderation be showed in dispensing community goods, and this is governed by distributive justice.

2. As a part and the whole are identical in a sense, so too in a sense that which is of the whole is also of a part. Accordingly when something is given to each from the goods of the community each in a way receives what is his own.

3. The act of distributing common goods is the office of him who is their guardian. Nevertheless distributive justice is also in subjects in that they

From *Summa Theologica* 2, II, q. 61, art. 1, trans. T. Gilby, O.P., Blackfriars ed., vol. 37 (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975), pp. 87-101.

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are content with the fair sharing out. Yet note that distributive justice may be from the common goods of the family, not the State, and this dispensing can be done by the authority of a private person.

4. A movement gets its character from the term it arrives at. Accordingly general or legal justice aims to conduct the dealings of private persons to the good of the community, whereas the reverse holds when that is brought to private persons, such distribution is a function of particular justice.

5. It is not merely the one and the many that gives rise to the distinction between commutative and distributive justice, it is also the difference between types or kinds of what is due, for somebody is entitled in one manner to what is his own, but in another to what is the community's.

Second Article: Do Commutative and Distributive Justice Strike the Just Mean in the Same Fashion?

The Second Point: 1. So it would seem. For we have agreed that both are contained under particular justice. Now all the specific parts of the moral virtues of fortitude and temperance take the virtuous mean in the same manner. So then also the commutative and distributive parts of justice.

2. Again, the shaping principle or form of a moral virtue consists in observing a mean determined by reason. Since, then, there is one and the same form in one virtue, it would seem that the virtuous mean is struck in the same manner by commutative and distributive justice alike.

3. Further, in distributive justice the mean is struck when attention is paid to differences of personal rank. But this is attended to in commutative justice, for instance, in imposing penalties, for a heavier sentence is incurred for offering violence to a ruler than to a private person. Both kinds of justice, then, are alike in taking the virtuous mean.

On the Other Hand, Aristotle holds that the mean is taken in distributive justice according to geometrical proportion and in commutative justice according to arithmetical proportion.

Reply: We have said that distributive justice gives something to a private person is so far as

something belonging to the community is due to a part. This is so much the more considerable in correspondence with the greater importance of the part in the whole. Consequently so much the more is given from the common stock as the recipient holds more responsibility in the community. Importance is assessed in an aristocracy by virtue, in an oligarchy by wealth, in a democracy by liberty, and in other regimes variously. So then the virtuous mean is taken in distributive justice, not according to an equality between thing and thing, but according to a proportion between things and persons, and in such a way that even as one person exceeds another so also that which is meted out to him exceeds that which is meted out to the other. Accordingly, Aristotle describes the mean here as being according to geometric proportionality, in which the even balance or equality lies in a comparative relation, not in a fixed quantity. Thus we reckon that 6 is to 4 as 3 is to 2; in each case the proportion is 1.5, since the greater number is the sum of the smaller plus a half. The excess is not, however, of simple quantity, since 6 exceeds 4 by 2, whereas 3 exceeds 2 by 1.

It is otherwise in exchanges between persons. There something is rendered to an individual person in return for something of his that has been received: this most evidently appears in buying and selling, from which originates the notion of an exchange. There the balance or equalization of thing with thing is called for, so that a man should repay the other as much as he gains in acquiring the thing which belonged to the other. Here the equality will be according to an arithmetical mean, which lies between an equal plus and minus of quantities. Thus 5 is the mean between 6 and 4, since it exceeds the first and is exceeded by the second by 1. If each has 5 to start with, and one receives 1 from what belongs to the other, he will have 6 and the other will be left with 4. Justice will be served when both are brought back to the mean, by 1 being taken from the one who has 6 and given to the other who has 4. Then both will have 5, which is the mean.

Hence: 1. With the other moral virtues the mean is taken according to right reason with respect to the doer, not to outside things. Justice, however, strikes this latter objective medium, and, consequently, in diverse fashions corresponds to the diversity in social reality.

2. Equality is the general shaping form of justice, and here both distributive and commutative justice agree, but in the first it is taken according to geometrical proportionality, while in the second according to arithmetical.

3. In the give-and-take of action and passion among men the quality of a person involved affects the quantity or size of the thing done; striking a ruler offers greater injury than striking a private person. Yet with distributive justice what counts is the quality or station of a person considered in itself, whereas with commutative justice it lies in a diversification arising from the objective condition of that which is owing.

Third Article: Is the Subject-matter Diverse for each kind of Justice?

The Third Point: 1. Apparently not. For a diversity of matter makes a diversity of virtue, as is clear in the case of fortitude and temperance. Were distributive justice and commutative justice to have diverse subject-matters, they would not be contained under one virtue, namely justice.

2. Further, the dispensing, with which distributive justice is engaged, according to the *Ethics* is of money or honours or whatever can be apportioned to members of the community. There also are matters of exchanges between persons, and thus are the concern of commutative justice. Therefore the matters of distributive and commutative justice are not diverse.

3. Again, if the reason alleged for the difference of their subject-matters is the specific difference between distributive and commutative justice, then if there is no such specific difference the need for a difference of subject-matter will not arise. Now, though holding that commutative justice is one species of virtue, Aristotle admits that its subject-matter is manifold. It would not seem, then, that the two kinds of justice have different subject-matters.

On the Contrary, it is stated in the *Ethics* that one kind of justice is the governing virtue in distributions and another kind in exchanges.

Reply: We have said that justice is engaged with certain external activities concerning distributions and exchanges. These consist in the application or use of what is outside us, whether things or per-

sons or works we do. Things, as when we take from or restore to another his property; persons, as when we strike or insult another or, alternatively, treat him with respect; works, as when we justly claim another's labour or do a job for him. Now if we take as subject-matter what each kind of justice employs, then there is no difference between them, for things of the same sort can be apportioned out of the common stock and be also exchanged between individuals, and likewise hard work can be a matter both of allotment by the community and also of repayment according to private contract. If, however, in the subject-matter of the two kinds of justice we stress the dominant for each in dealing with persons, using things, and performing works, then there is a difference on either side. For distributive justice governs the apportioning of community goods, whereas commutative governs the exchanging that may take place between two persons.

Of these exchanges some are involuntary, some voluntary. They are involuntary when somebody employs another's thing, person or work without his consent. This may be done secretly by deceit or openly by violence. In either way injury may be committed against another's property or person or against the person of one close to him. Against his property: if taken secretly it is called theft, if openly it is called robbery. Against his person, if his life and health be attacked, and also his good-name and dignity: the first may be done secretly, as when he is treacherously slain, struck, or poisoned, or openly, as when he is publicly executed, struck, maimed, or sent to prison. His dignity is injured secretly by false witness, detraction, and the like, whereby he is robbed of his good name; it is done openly by accusation in a court of law or public insult. Against the person of a connection of his, as when he is injured by adultery with his wife, which is usually secret, or by the enticement of a servant; it can also be done openly. Whatever injury may be done to the principal victim under the headings outlined above may also be done to persons connected with him. Yet adultery and enticement are injuries properly against him, and the latter, since a servant in a sense is his belonging, comes back to theft.

Exchanges are called voluntary when a person willingly transfers something he owns to another. If he simply passes it to another in such wise that

the recipient incurs no strict debt, as when he makes a gift, this is an act of liberality, not of justice. A voluntary transfer comes under justice in so far as it involves the notion of something due. This can enter in several ways. First, when somebody simply transfers what is his in payment for something else, as happens in buying and selling. Second, when somebody transfers a thing he owns that another may have the use of it with the obligation of returning it later: if the use is granted without charge, then for things that bear fruit it is called usufruct, and for things that do not, such as cash, crockery, and so forth, it is called borrowing or lending. If there is a charge on the use, it is called renting or hiring. Third, when somebody hands over his property for safekeeping, not for use, and means to recover it, as with a deposit, or because of an obligation, as when he pledges a piece of property or stands surety for another.

In all dealings of this sort, whether involuntary or voluntary, the just mean is taken in the same sense according to a balance or equality in requital. Accordingly they all come under the same species of justice, namely commutative justice.

Hence: The reply to the objections is clear.

Fourth Article: Is the Just simply the same as the Reciprocal?

The fourth point: 1. So it would seem. For the divine judgment is purely and simply just, and this is the form it follows, that as a person does so shall he suffer; *With the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get.* Therefore the just simply is the same as the reciprocal.

2. Further, in either kind of justice something is rendered to a person according to a certain equivalence. With distributive justice this regards his worth, which is weighed by his works in the service of the community; with commutative justice this regards the thing in which he has suffered loss. Both demand requital for what has been done. So then it seems that the just simply is the same as the reciprocal.

3. Besides, the chief reason why man should not get what he gives seems to lie with the difference between involuntary and voluntary action; he who does an injury involuntarily suffers the

lighter penalty. But voluntary and involuntary are terms qualifying what is done on our side, and do not affect the just mean, which is a measure in reality, not merely according to our frame of mind. Consequently the just simply seems the same as the reciprocal.

On the Other Hand, there is Aristotle proving that the just does not always coincide with the reciprocal.

Reply: The term contrapassum, literally "counter-suffered," spells an exact concordance of a reaction with the antecedent action. Such a tit-for-tat most properly applies when injury is undergone caused by a man harming the person of his neighbour, for instance if he strike him let him be struck in return. The Old Law determines such a just requital; *If any harm follows, you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth*, and so forth. In the second place, because to take from another his property is a thing unjust, the notion of retaliation also applies there, so that one who inflicts loss on another should also suffer loss in his belongings. This, too, is contained in the Old Law; *If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and kills it or sells it, he shall pay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep*. Finally, the notion is extended to voluntary exchanges, where there is something done and undergone on either side. Remember, however, that the passive character of undergoing something is lessened by its voluntariness. In all such cases the nature of commutative justice demands that equivalent recompense be made, namely that the reaction as repayment matches the action.

This would not always be the case were the doer to undergo the same in kind to that which he caused. Take the case, to begin with, of a subordinate who injures his superior; his action is more serious than a like action done on him in return. And so he who strikes a ruler is not only struck back, but also much more severely punished. Then take the case of one who unjustly takes another's property without the owner's consent; his action would exceed his undergoing the consequences were only that property to be taken away from him, for he who inflicted loss on another would suffer no loss of property in return. In consequence he is punished by a fine heavier than the simple disgorgement of his gain, for he did an injury, not only to a private person, but also to the

Of Cheating, Which is Committed in Buying and Selling

First, we shall consider cheating, which is committed in buying and selling; secondly, we shall consider usury, which occurs in loans. In connection with the other voluntary commutations no special kind of sin is to be found distinct from rapine and theft.

Under the first head there are four points of inquiry: (1) Of unjust sales as regards the price; namely, whether it is lawful to sell a thing for more than its worth? (2) Of unjust sales on the part of the thing sold. (3) Whether the seller is bound to reveal a fault in the thing sold? (4) Whether it is lawful in trading to sell a thing at a higher price than was paid for it?

First Article: Whether It Is Lawful to Sell a Thing For More Than Its Worth?

We proceed thus to the First Article.

Objection 1. It would seem that it is lawful to sell a thing for more than its worth. In the commutations of human life, civil laws determine that which is just. Now according to these laws it is just for buyer and seller to deceive one another; and this occurs by the seller selling a thing for more than its worth, and the buyer buying a thing for less than its worth. Therefore it is lawful to sell a thing for more than its worth.

Objection 2. Further, that which is common to all would seem to be natural and not sinful. Now Augustine relates that the saying of a certain jester was accepted by all, *You wish to buy for a song and to sell at a premium, which agrees with the saying, It is naught, it is naught, saith every buyer: and when he is gone away, then he will boast.* Therefore it is lawful to sell a thing for more than its worth.

Objection 3. Further, it does not seem unlawful if that which honesty demands be done by mutual agreement. Now, according to the Philosopher in the friendship which is based on utility, the

commonwealth by breaking the security which is in its charge. So too neither in voluntary exchanges is requital always the give and return of things of the same sort, for sometimes they are unequal. Consequently in exchanges the equalization of what is done and what is undergone in return requires a certain proportionate standard of measurement: for this purpose was money invented. It is in this sense that a *quid pro quo* is what is right and just for commutative justice.

Note, however, that in distributive justice such reciprocity has no place, for the equalization is not taken there according to the proportion of things to thing, or of doing an action to undergoing the reaction (whence the term *contrapassum*), but according to the proportionality of things to persons, as already explained.

Hence: 1. Divine judgment follows the form of commutative justice in that reward is the recompense of merit, and punishment that of sin.

2. When a man who has served the community is requited for his services, that is an act of commutative, not distributive justice. For distributive justice considers the correspondence, not between that which is spent and that which is received, but between that which is received by one and by another in accordance with their respective degrees.

3. The injury is augmented when the injurious action is voluntary, and is treated accordingly as a more important thing. Hence it calls for greater punishment in recompense. The difference is not in our thinking merely, but also in objective reality.

*entry to
productive justice*

From *Summa Theologica*, 2, 11, q. 77, art. 1, ed. D. Bigongiari (New York: Hafner Publishing Co., 1957), pp. 224-32.

amount of the recompense for a favor received should depend on the utility accruing to the receiver: and this utility sometimes is worth more than the thing given, for instance if the receiver be in great need of that thing, whether for the purpose of avoiding a danger, or of deriving some particular benefit. Therefore, in contracts of buying and selling, it is lawful to give a thing in return for more than its worth.

On the contrary, it is written *All things . . . whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them*. But no man wishes to buy a thing for more than its worth. Therefore no man should sell a thing to another man for more than its worth.

I answer that, it is altogether sinful to have recourse to deceit in order to sell a thing for more than its just price, because this is to deceive one's neighbor so as to injure him. Hence Tully [Cicero] says Contracts should be entirely free from double-dealing; the seller must not impose upon the bidder, nor the buyer upon one that bids against him.

But, apart from fraud, we may speak of buying and selling in two ways. First, as considered in themselves, and from this point of view, buying and selling seem to be established for the common advantage of both parties, one of whom requires that which belongs to the other, and vice versa, as the Philosopher states. Now whatever is established for the common advantage, should not be more of a burden to one party than to another, and consequently all contracts between them should observe equality of thing and thing. Again, the quality of a thing that comes into human use is measured by the price given for it, for which purpose money was invented, as stated in the *Ethics*. Therefore if either the price exceed the quantity of the thing's worth, or, conversely, the thing exceed the price, there is no longer the equality of justice: and consequently, to sell a thing for more than its worth, or to buy it for less than its worth, is in itself unjust and unlawful.

Secondly we may speak of buying and selling, considered as accidentally tending to the advantage of one party, and to the disadvantage of the other: for instance, when a man has great need of a certain thing, while another man will suffer if he be without it. In such a case the just price will depend not only on the thing sold, but on the loss which the sale brings on the seller. And thus it will

be lawful to sell a thing for more than it is worth in itself, though the price paid be not more than it is worth to the owner. Yet if the one man derive a great advantage by becoming possessed of the other man's property, and the teller be not at a loss through being without that thing, the latter ought not to raise the price, because the advantage accruing to the buyer is not due to the seller, but to a circumstance affecting the buyer. Now no man should sell what is not his, though he may charge for the loss he suffers.

On the other hand if a man find that he derives great advantage from something he has bought, he may, of his own accord, pay the seller something over and above, and this pertains to his honesty.

Reply Objection 1. Human law is given to the people among whom there are many lacking virtue, and it is not given to the virtuous alone. Hence human law was unable to forbid all that is contrary to virtue; and it suffices for it to prohibit whatever is destructive of human intercourse, while it treats other matters as though they were lawful, not by approving of them, but by not punishing them. Accordingly, if without employing deceit the seller disposes of his goods for more than their worth, or the buyer obtain them for less than their worth, the law looks upon this as licit, and provides no punishment for so doing, unless the excess be too great, because then even human law demands restitution to be made, for instance if a man be deceived in regard of more than half the amount of the just price of a thing.

On the other hand the Divine law leaves nothing unpunished that is contrary to virtue. Hence, according to the Divine law, it is reckoned unlawful if the equality of justice be not observed in buying and selling: and he who has received more than he ought must make compensation to him that has suffered loss, if the loss be considerable. I add this condition, because the just price of things is not fixed with mathematical precision, but depends on a kind of estimate, so that a slight addition or subtraction would not seem to destroy the equality of justice.

Reply Objection 2. As Augustine says *this jester, either by looking into himself or by his experience of others, thought that all men are inclined to wish to buy for a song and sell at a premium. But since in reality this is wicked, it is in every man's power to acquire that justice whereby he may resist and over-*

come this inclination. And then he gives the example of a man who gave the just price for a book to a man who through ignorance asked a low price for it. Hence it is evident that this common desire is not from nature but from vice, wherefore it is common to many who walk along the broad road of sin.

Reply Objection 3. In commutative justice we consider chiefly real equality. On the other hand, in friendship based on utility we consider equality of usefulness so that the recompense should depend on the usefulness accruing, whereas in buying it should be equal to the thing bought.

Second Article: Whether a Sale is Rendered Unlawful Through a Fault in the Thing Sold?

We proceed thus to the Second Article.

Objection 1. It would seem that a sale is not rendered unjust and unlawful through a fault in the thing sold. For less account should be taken of the other parts of a thing than of what belongs to its substance. Yet the sale of a thing does not seem to be rendered unlawful through a fault in its substance: for instance, if a man sell instead of the real metal, silver or gold produced by some chemical process, which is adapted to all the human uses for which silver and gold are necessary, for instance in the making of vessels and the like. Much less therefore will it be an unlawful sale if the thing be defective in other ways.

Objection 2. Further, any fault in the thing, affecting the quantity, would seem chiefly to be opposed to justice which consists in equality. Now quantity is known by being measured: and the measures of things that come into human use are not fixed, but in some places are greater, in others less, as the Philosopher states. Therefore just as it is impossible to avoid defects on the part of the thing sold, it seems that a sale is not rendered unlawful through the thing sold being defective.

Objection 3. Further, the thing sold is rendered defective by lacking a fitting quality. But in order to know the quality of a thing, much knowledge is required that is lacking in most buyers. Therefore a sale is not rendered unlawful by a fault (in the thing sold).

On the contrary, Ambrose says: *It is manifestly*

a rule of justice that a good man should not depart from the truth, nor inflict an unjust on anyone, nor have any connection with fraud.

I answer that a threefold fault may be found pertaining to the thing which is sold. One, in respect of the thing's substance: and if the seller be aware of a fault in the thing he is selling, he is guilty of a fraudulent sale, so that the sale is rendered unlawful. Hence we find it written against certain people, *Thy silver is turned into dross, thy wine is mingled with water*: because that which is mixed is defective in its substance.

Another defect is in respect of quantity which is known by being measured: wherefore if anyone knowingly make use of a faulty measure in selling, he is guilty of fraud, and the sale is illicit. Hence it is written: *Thou shalt not have divers weights in thy bag, a greater and a less: neither shall there be in thy house a greater bushel and a less, and further on: For the Lord . . . abhorreth him that doth these things, and He hateth all injustice.*

A third defect is on the part of the quality, for instance, if a man sell an unhealthy animal as being a healthy one: and if anyone do this knowingly he is guilty of a fraudulent sale, and the sale, in consequence, is illicit.

In all these cases not only is the man guilty of a fraudulent sale, but he is also bound to restitution. But if any of the foregoing defects be in the thing sold, and he knows nothing about this, the seller does not sin, because he does that which is unjust materially, nor is his deed unjust. Nevertheless he is bound to compensate the buyer, when the defect comes to his knowledge. Moreover what has been said of the seller applies equally to the buyer. For sometimes it happens that the seller thinks his goods to be specifically of lower value, as when a man sells gold instead of copper, and then if the buyer be aware of this, he buys it unjustly and is bound to restitution: and the same applies to a defect in quantity as to a defect in quality.

Reply Objection 1. Gold and silver are costly not only on account of the usefulness of the vessels and other like things made from them, but also on account of the excellence and purity of their substance. Hence if the gold or silver produced by alchemists has not the true specific nature of gold and silver, the sale thereof is fraudulent and unjust, especially as real gold and silver can produce

certain results by their natural action, which the counterfeit gold and silver of alchemists cannot produce. Thus the true metal has the property of making people joyful, and is helpful medicinally against certain maladies. Moreover real gold can be employed more frequently, and lasts longer in its condition of purity than counterfeit gold. If however real gold were to be produced by alchemy, it would not be unlawful to sell it for the genuine article, for nothing prevents art from employing certain natural causes for the production of natural and true effects, as Augustine says of things produced by the art of the demons.

Reply Objection 2. The measures of saleable commodities must needs be different in different places, on account of the difference of supply: because where there is greater abundance, the measures are wont to be larger. However in each place those who govern the state must determine the just measures of things saleable, with due consideration for the conditions of place and time. Hence it is not lawful to disregard such measures as are established by public authority or custom.

Reply Objection 3. As Augustine says the price of things saleable does not depend on their degree of nature, since at times a horse fetches a higher price than a slave; but it depends on their usefulness to man. Hence it is not necessary for the seller or buyer to be cognizant of the hidden qualities of the thing sold, but only of such as render the thing adapted to man's use, for instance, that the horse be strong, run well and so forth. Such qualities the seller and buyer can easily discover.

Third Article: Whether the Seller is Bound to State the Defects of the Things Sold?

We proceed thus to the Third Article.

Objection 1. It would seem that the seller is not bound to state the defects of the thing sold. Since the seller does not bind the buyer to buy, he would seem to leave it to him to judge of the goods offered for sale. Now judgment about a thing and knowledge of that thing belong to the same person. Therefore it does not seem imputable to the seller if the buyer be deceived in his judgment, and be hurried into buying a thing without carefully inquiring into its condition.

Objection 2. Further, it seems foolish for anyone to do what prevents him carrying out his work. But if a man states the defects of the goods he has for sale, he prevents their sale: wherefore Tully pictures a man as saying: *Could anything be more absurd than for a public crier, instructed by the owner, to cry: "I offer this unhealthy house for sale"?* Therefore the seller is not bound to state the defects of the thing sold.

Objection 3. Further, man needs more to know the road of virtue than to know the faults of things offered for sale. Now one is not bound to offer advice to all or to tell them the truth about matters pertaining to virtue, though one should not tell anyone what is false. Much less therefore is a seller bound to tell the faults of what he offers for sale, as though he were counselling the buyer.

Objection 4. Further, if one were bound to tell the faults of what one offers for sale, this would only be in order to lower the price. Now sometimes the price would be lowered for some other reason, without any defect in the thing sold: for instance, if the seller carry wheat to a place where wheat fetches a high price, knowing that many will come after him carrying wheat; because if the buyers knew this they would give a lower price. But apparently the seller need not give the buyer this information. Therefore, in like manner, neither, need he tell him the faults of the goods he is selling.

On the contrary, Ambrose says: In all contracts the defects of the saleable commodity must be stated; *and unless the seller make them known, although the buyer has already acquired a right to them, the contract is voided on account of the fraudulent action.*

I answer that it is always unlawful to give anyone an occasion of danger or loss, although a man need not always give another the help or counsel which would be for his advantage in any way; but only in certain fixed cases, for instance when someone is subject to him, or when he is the only one who can assist him. Now the seller who offers goods for sale, gives the buyer an occasion of loss or danger, by the very fact that he offers him defective goods, if such defect may occasion loss or danger to the buyer: loss, if, by reason of this defect, the goods are of less value, and he takes nothing off the price on that account: danger, if this defect either hinder the use of the goods or render

It hurtful, for instance, if a man sells a lame for a fleet horse, a tottering house for a safe one, rotten or poisonous food for wholesome. Wherefore if suchlike defects be hidden, and the seller does not make them known, the sale will be illicit and fraudulent, and the seller will be bound to compensation for the loss incurred.

On the other hand, if the defect be manifest, for instance if a horse have but one eye, or if the goods though useless to the buyer, be useful to someone else, provided the seller take as much as he ought from the price, he is not bound to state the defect of the goods, since perhaps on account of that defect the buyer might want him to allow a greater rebate than he need. Wherefore the seller may look to his own indemnity, by withholding the defect of the goods.

Reply Objection 1. Judgment cannot be pronounced save on what is manifest: for a man judges of what he knows. Hence if the defects of the goods offered for sale be hidden, judgment of them is not sufficiently left with the buyer unless such defects be made known to him. The case would be different if the defects were manifest.

Reply Objection 2. There is no need to publish beforehand by the public crier the defects of the goods one is offering for sale, because if he were to begin by announcing its defects, the bidders would be frightened to buy, through ignorance of other qualities that might render the thing good and serviceable. Such defect ought to be stated to each individual that offers to buy: and then he will be able to compare the various points one with the other, the good with the bad: for nothing prevents that which is defective in one respect being useful in many others.

Reply Objection 3. Although a man is not bound strictly speaking to tell everyone the truth about matters pertaining to virtue, yet he is so bound in a case when unless he tells the truth, his conduct would endanger another man in detriment to virtue: and so it is in this case.

Reply Objection 4. The defect in a thing makes it of less value now than it seems to be: but in the case cited, the goods are expected to be of less value at a future time, on account of the arrival of other merchants, which was not foreseen by the buyers. Wherefore the seller, since he sells his goods at the price actually offered him, does not seem to act contrary to justice through not stating

what is going to happen. If however he were to do so, or if he lowered his price, it would be exceedingly virtuous on his part: although he does not seem to be bound to do this as a debt of justice.

Fourth Article: Whether, in Trading, it is Lawful to Sell a Thing at a Higher Price Than What Was Paid For It?

We proceed thus to the Fourth Article.

Objection 1. It would seem that it is not lawful, in trading, to sell a thing for a higher price than we paid for it. For Chrysostom says (in his commentary) on Matth. xxi,12: *He that buys a thing in order that he may sell it, entire and unchanged, at a profit, is the trader who is cast out of God's temple. Cassiodorus speaks in the same sense in his commentary on Ps. lxx,15, Because I have not known learning, or trading according to another version: What is trade, says he, but buying at a cheap price with the purpose of retailing at a higher price?* and he adds: *Such were the tradesmen whom Our Lord cast out of the temple.* Now no man is cast out of the temple except for a sin. Therefore suchlike trading is sinful.

Objection 2. Further, it is contrary to justice to sell goods at a higher price than their worth, or to buy them for less than their value. Now if you sell a thing for a higher price than you paid for it, you must either have bought it for less than its value, or sell it for more than its value. Therefore this cannot be done without sin.

Objection 3. Further, Jerome says: *Shun, as you would the plague, a cleric who from being poor has become wealthy, or who, from being a nobody has become a celebrity.* Now trading would not seem to be forbidden to clerics except on account of its sinfulness. Therefore it is a sin in trading, to buy at a low price and to sell at a higher price.

On the contrary, Augustine commenting on Ps. lxx,15, *Because I have known learning, says: The greedy tradesman blasphemes over his losses; he lies and perjures himself over the price of his wares. But these are vices of the man, not of the craft, which can be exercised without these vices. Therefore trading is not in itself unlawful.*

Answer that a tradesman is one whose business consists in the exchange of things. According to the Philosopher exchange of things is twofold;

one, natural as it were, and necessary, whereby one commodity is exchanged for another, or money taken in exchange for a commodity, in order to satisfy the needs of life. Suchlike trading, properly speaking does not belong to tradesmen, but rather to housekeepers or civil servants who have to provide the household or the state with the necessities of life. The other kind of exchange is either that of money for money, or of any commodity for money, not on account of the necessities of life, but for profit, and this kind of exchange, properly speaking, regards tradesman, according to the Philosopher. The former kind of exchange is commendable because it supplies a natural need; but the latter is justly deserving of blame, because, considered in itself, it satisfies the greed for gain, which knows no limit and tends to infinity. Hence trading, considered in itself, has a certain debasement attaching thereto, in so far as, by its very nature, it does not imply a virtuous or necessary end. Nevertheless gain which is the end of trading, though not implying, by its nature, anything virtuous or necessary, does not, in itself, connote anything sinful or contrary to virtue: wherefore nothing prevents gain from being directed to some necessary or even virtuous end, and thus trading becomes lawful. Thus, for instance, a man may intend the moderate gain which he seeks to acquire by trading for the upkeep of his household, or for the assistance of the needy: or again, a man may take to trade for some public advantage, for instance, lest his country lack the necessities of life, and seek gain, not as an end, but as payment for his labor.

Reply Objection 1. The saying of Chrysostom refers to the trading which seeks gain as a last end. This is especially the case where a man sells something at a higher price without its undergoing any change. For if he sells at a higher price something that has changed for the better, he would seem to receive the reward of his labor. Nevertheless the gain itself may be lawfully intended, not as a last end, but for the sake of some other end which is necessary or virtuous, as stated above.

Reply Objection 2. Not everyone that sells at a higher price than he bought is a tradesman, but only he who buys that he may sell at a profit. If, on the contrary, he buys not for sale but for possession, and afterwards, for some reason wishes to sell, it is not a trade transaction even if he sells at

a profit. For he may lawfully do this, either because he has bettered the thing, or because the value of the thing has changed with the change of place or time, or on account of the danger he incurs in transferring the thing from one place to another, or again in having it carried by another. In this sense neither buying nor selling is unjust.

Reply Objection 3. Clerics should abstain not only from things that are evil in themselves, but even from those that have an appearance of evil. This happens in trading, both because it is directed to worldly gain, which clerics should despise, and because trading is open to so many vices, since a merchant is hardly free from sins of the lips. There is also another reason, because trading engages the mind too much with worldly cares, and consequently withdraws it from spiritual cares; wherefore the Apostle says: *No man being a soldier to God entangleth himself with secular businesses.* Nevertheless it is lawful for clerics to engage in the first mentioned kind of exchange, which is directed to supply the necessities of life, either by buying or by selling.

The Myth of Self-Interest

It was Reinhold Niebuhr who quipped that original sin was the one empirically verifiable Christian tenet. All one had to do, maintained Niebuhr, was observe one's neighbor. For the great Protestant theologian and his followers, original sin was the religious symbol cited to explain self-interest in politics. Within the school of "Christian realism" the Fall is used not only to explain but to justify political and economic arrangements premised on self-interest. Anything else would be open to the charge of naïveté, the worse failing of nonrealists.

Political and economic systems always embody an understanding of the human. Liberalism and capitalism, with their emphasis on self-interest, are founded ultimately upon a theological anthropology quite different from that which grounds a model of political economy which stresses community. . . .

Catholic doctrine acknowledged the tragic consequences of Adam's sin but insisted that the human being remained essentially intact after the Fall. Adam lost "the holiness and justice in which he had been constituted" and "incurred the wrath and indignation of God" and "was changed in body and soul for the worse," the Council of Trent taught. But human beings are not utterly corrupted and "free will, weakened as it was in its powers and downward bent, was by no means extinguished in them." Indeed, Trent specifically condemned the opinion that all human works done "before justification" (Hobbes's "state of nature") are sinful, that is, purely self-interested. Later in the sixteenth century, disputes about the sovereignty of grace and the status of human freedom led to the teaching that the original justice and holiness of Adam were "accidental," not intrinsic to the human person as human. This original justice and holiness were lost as a result of original sin, but since they were accidental qualities, human

nature remained essentially unimpaired. As some Counter-Reformation Catholic theologians phrased the point, the human person, created in the image and likeness of God, might lose that likeness, consisting in original justice and holiness, but retained the image of God. Beneath these Counter-Reformation statements lies an important claim about the meaning of human existence.

Deeply ingrained in the Western Christian tradition is the Augustinian insight that, as creatures who exist solely to be the recipients of the divine self-gift, our hearts are restless until they rest in God. This insight was echoed in the central point of Thomas Aquinas's theological vision, that at the core of human existence is a natural desire to see God. Thus there is a con-naturality between nature and grace; nature has an aptitude for grace. Extinguish this restlessness, this desire for the beatific vision, and what remains is no longer a human being. Original sin may have distorted this restlessness, it may have skewed the direction of this desire, but it has not undone God's creation: humanity remains human. The longing for *agape* is experienced in the call to be *agapic*, the call to give oneself away. Consequently, Catholic doctrine has insisted in opposition to the darker views of the Reformers that the human being, made in the image of God who is *agape*, remains in that image even after the Fall and so is capable, even if with great difficulty, of genuine other-directedness.

The secularized theological anthropology which underlies [the modern, liberal social ethic] is classically Protestant. If one were to develop a secularized theological anthropology of the Catholic view of original sin, what social ethic emerges? Unlike Hobbes, a Catholic-inspired model of society will acknowledge a need not only to minimize and restrain the evil of self-interest but also the challenge to maximize the good of self-giving. Because Catholics believe that the most important word we say about the human is *grace*, not *sin*, strategies for

community must be given priority over concern for limiting or channeling self-interest. That is why Roman Catholic social thought has traditionally posited that humanity is social by nature. . . . Thus, a fundamental characteristic of Catholic social theory is its stress on the necessity for persons to express their social nature through the institutions they create to order

their lives. Political and economic institutions premised on the primacy of self-interest can never embody the theological vision of a good society in the Catholic tradition.

— Michael J. Himes and Kenneth R. Himes,
"The Myth of Self-Interest," *Commonweal*,
23 Sept. 1988, pp. 493, 495-96

Thomas of Aquinas employs Greek philosophy, scripture, and early Christian theology to construct his Summa Theologica and other writings, joining a teleological, Aristotelian understanding of the gradual realization of true human nature and ends with a Christian theological view of God as the first cause, source and Creator of all creation. In this model, some knowledge of God and the human telos is attainable through the use of human reason, and attested to by scripture and theology. This theological project has served as a basis, since the thirteenth century, for later development (and rejection) of natural law and theology. This essay will address Thomas' treatment of the intrinsic principles of human acts (habits, and particularly the habit of virtue), and the extrinsic principles of human acts: law and grace.

Thomas
Habits and Virtues

ST/E 49
Aquinas begins his treatment of intrinsic principles with the substance of habits in general. He argues that "habits are perfections,"¹ or the ends of things, and as such are necessary. Habit links potentiality in human nature with action towards an end. (546) Some habits are natural, in the sense that they may be natural to the human species and that particular habits may be within the natural capacities of particular persons. However, such natural human bases for habit always depend on further development by extrinsic principles and sources. For example, "the understanding of first principles is called a natural habit," (549) yet the use of that understanding depends on sensory and other knowledge. This extrinsic development of habits may also be caused by acts, particularly in the case of the habits of virtue and vice. (551) Habits, however, generally require repeated acts for their formation, since the

¹ Anton C. Pegis, editor. Introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas (New York: Random House, 1948), p. 545. All subsequent citations to this text will be made parenthetically in the essay.

active principle, reason, can not fully overcome the passive principle, the appetites, so quickly. (553)

Some habits are also "infused" into human beings by God; some of these exceed humans' power to acquire, and some are human powers given more perfectly (for example, God's gifts to the apostles).

(554) Habits are distinguished or differ according to their objects, since they are "dispositions to acts."

(556) Thus the objects of infused and acquired habits may differ; acquired habits may be divided into good and bad, or tending toward virtue and vice according to their agreement with reason. (558)

Virtues are a particular type of habit; as a "perfection" of a power, virtue relates to the end of power, action, as habits do. (561) Thomas defends Peter Lombard's definition of virtue as "a good quality of mind, by which we live righteously, of which no one can make bad use." (562) Here virtues are habits that cannot be directed to evil, unlike those habits that may tend to good or evil. Infused virtues are those "which God works in us without us," although with our consent; other virtues are acquired virtues, which are ultimately caused by God but also involve our action. (564-5) Virtue "belongs to a power of the soul," and perfects the soul through action and operation, rather than serving as the essence of the soul. (567)

Thomas names three types of virtues: intellectual, moral, and theological. The intellectual virtues are wisdom, "which considers the highest causes" and orders all truths; science, which "perfects the intellect" regarding knowable truths; and understanding, which readies and perfects the intellect to consider the truth of principles. (569) He also considers the status of art, or "right reason about certain works to be made," which finally is accorded the nature of a virtue. This counters the objection that since art may be badly used by a craftsman, it cannot be a virtue; here Thomas argues that bad workmanship contradicts its art, and that art is always related to the good. (572) Prudence is presented here as a different but related virtue, consisting of the "right reason of things to be done." (573) Prudence, a moral virtue, is necessary for humans to have a good life, in that prudence directs the reason and appetites toward the good ends necessary for a good life. (576)

Moral virtues differ from intellectual virtues in their explicit relation to the appetites; while the intellectual virtues may rightly dispose the reason to a good end, good deeds also require that the "appetite be well disposed by means of a habit of moral virtue." (582) This relation to appetite also dictates that there be a variety of moral virtues, relating to the various objects of human appetites, (584) and concludes that the moral virtues (temperance, justice, prudence, and fortitude) are cardinal, or principal, virtues.(586) All four are necessary for the realization of the good through the ordering, by reason, of operations and passions, and are matched to the four subjects of virtue: prudence, pertaining to essentially rational power; justice, pertaining to the will; temperance, pertaining to concupiscence; and fortitude, pertaining to strengthening. (588-589)

Thomas then turns to the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity. He argues that a human being is "perfected by virtue for those actions by which he is directed to happiness." (591) Human happiness is twofold: both existing in proportion to human nature (and obtained by the principles of human nature), and also as a happiness beyond human nature, wholly dependent on God's power. Theological virtues are the principles by which humans are directed to this second type of happiness, which has God as object. These virtues are infused into human beings by God and only made known through "divine revelation, contained in Holy Scripture." (591)

Theological virtues differ from intellectual and moral virtues in that the latter virtues are proportional to human nature and reason. The three theological virtues all point to an end beyond human reason: faith involves humans receiving what is to be believed, hope directs the will to the possible attainment of what is believed, and charity involves the transformation of the will to its end, in a form of spiritual union. (594) While these virtues are generated in the above order, Thomas argues that "charity is the mother and the root of all the virtues" and thus precedes the others in the order of perfection. (596)

Virtues, generally, are not fully realized in human beings in their nature. Here Thomas contrasts the Platonic view of virtue, which understands virtue as naturally preexistent in the soul, and Aristotle's understanding that humans naturally have the ability to acquire virtue. (598) Thomas argues that moral

and intellectual virtues "are in us aptitudinally and inchoately" which theological virtues are wholly outside us. Human virtue, where it pertains to a good defined by human reason, can arise from human acts; here, again, the theological virtues are not included due to their dependence upon divine action. (601) Despite these distinctions between the theological and other virtues, Thomas argues that God may infuse humans with these other virtues in order to perfect humans toward their divinely set end. (602) As in other habits, those virtues infused by God and acquired virtues differ both in object and means of acquisition; Thomas draws, for example, the contrast between acquired temperance (in which food consumption is based on the health of human body and reason) and infused temperance (in which abstinence and physical deprivation serve a spiritual end). (604) These infused virtues pertain to behavior in "the household of God," while acquired virtues pertain to strictly human affairs. (604) Thomas concludes his discussion of virtue with a defense of virtue as a mean.²

Law and Grace

Here we move to the extrinsic principles of acts; Thomas contrasts the "extrinsic principle inclining to evil," the devil, with God as "the extrinsic principle moving to Good." (609) Law serves as God's means of instruction, while grace is God's means of assistance. Law pertains to reason, rather than simply to volition or will. (610-11) This guards against law as simply serving private ends or goods; instead, law is directed toward the common good and common end (in contrast to precepts, which may serve private ends.) Since the law is tied to the common good, "the making of a law belongs either to the whole people or to a public personage who has care of the people." (614) As a "rule or a measure" those upon whom a law is imposed must know of it. This completes Thomas' definition of law as "an ordinance of reason for the common good, promulgated by him who has the care of the community." (615)

² Since the good of moral virtue lies in "conformity with the rule of reason" it is a mean in its essence; here Thomas draws on Aristotle's Ethics to show that its operation, moral virtue serves also as an extreme of excellence.

Thomas then identifies four types of law: eternal law, natural law, human law, and divine law.

Eternal law is the God-given law behind all creation; since "the world is ruled by divine providence ... the whole community of the universe is governed by the divine reason." (616) The eternal law is "the exemplar of divine wisdom"; through divine wisdom God creates, and directs all the acts of every creature toward their ordained end. (629) Eternal law is known to humans in its effect and reflection (not in its essence); the knowledge of eternal law is related to one's capacity to know truth. As "the plan of government of the Chief Governor," eternal law is the source of all law that is rooted in right reason. (633) Here Thomas also argues that unjust law, "in so far as it retains some appearance of law" through its promulgation by some authority, is also drawn from eternal law: "all power is from the Lord God."

(633)

Natural law consists in participation, through reason, in the eternal law; our natural reason, or ability to discern good and evil, is "an imprint on us of the divine light." (618) Natural law is a habit, in one sense, in that its precepts may be in the reason only due to habit. However, it is, in its essence, not a habit, since it is "appointed by reason" rather than a mechanism by which we act. (635) The natural law contains a number of precepts, all of which give particular force to the first precept that good should be done and evil not done. The precepts are ordered according to natural inclinations: first those pertaining to self-preservation, then those pertaining to reproduction and raising offspring, then the "natural inclination to know the truth about God, and to live in society." (638) Natural law contains, also, virtuous acts "in so far as they are virtuous"; the natural human inclination to act in accordance with reason is also the inclination to act with virtue. (639) However, virtuous acts, taken severally, may in themselves be the product of natural inclination or through the application of reason.

Thomas argues that the natural law is the same in all persons in terms of "common notions," or the principles of reason. He distinguishes here between speculative and practical reason; in speculative reason, while the truth of principles and conclusions is the same for all persons, not every person will recognize the truth of the conclusions. In practical reason, while common principles are true for all, their

applications or conclusions in particular cases may differ. (641) This means that the natural law may appropriately be added to (both by divine and human law) or be altered in its secondary principles in particular cases. (643) It is these secondary principles that may be "blotted out" or twisted through evil or corruption in custom or habit. (645) However, this does not alter the first, universal principles of natural law.

Human law arises from the limits of natural law's participation in eternal law; it deals with the movement from human reason to the determination of particulars. (620) Thomas argues for the usefulness of human law as a means of training for virtue and the restraint of evil. (646) Since "the force of a law depends on its justice," human laws stand as law in so far as they come from natural law; where they deviate, the human law is only a "perversion of law." (649) Those human laws which are conclusions derived from the principles of natural law also carry the force of natural law; other human laws or precepts which are only determinations for particular situations do not carry this additional force. (649-50)

Finally, Thomas also identifies divine law as necessary for the directing of human action toward the "last end," or eternal happiness. This divine law is clear, pertains to external and internal human acts, and goes further than human law can in punishing human evil. (621-622) Thomas divides divine law into the "Old Law" (which pertains to "a sensible and earthly good") and the "New Law" (pertaining to "an intelligible and heavenly good.") Thomas presents Old Law as marked by purely external control and fear, while the New Law affects and changes the soul through love. Into this schema, as well, Thomas introduces the "fomes" of sin (the inclination toward sensuality and the private good) as a type of law which serves as the just penalty for the Fall. (626-627)

Grace is the extrinsic means by which God helps humans do the right. Thomas argues that "for the knowledge of any truth whatsoever man needs divine help in order that the intellect may be moved by God to its act." (653) Yet this is only for those truths beyond natural knowledge; natural reason can apprehend some truths. However, God, even here, remains the source and form of intellect. Similarly, in

the original created state, human ability to will good and do good is limited, although not totally absent.

After the Fall, humans need divine help even to fully perform the good proper to created human nature.

(655) This distinction between created or "integral" nature and corrupted, fallen nature shapes Thomas' entire discussion of grace. While before the Fall, humans naturally loved God above all things, including self, after the Fall the rational will pursues private good. (657) Grace is necessary here, too, as a "cure."

Thomas offers, however, one exception to the distinction between integral and corrupted nature: even in the integral state of nature, before the Fall, God's grace was necessary for humans to truly fulfill the commandments of the law (although external compliance was possible without additional grace); after the Fall, grace is required for any sort of compliance. (659)

Thomas here turns to the role of grace in obtaining eternal life. Here he states that since "eternal life is an end exceeding the proportion of human nature," it may not be merited through natural power alone. (660) Grace is necessary, as one's works alone can lead to only a human good. Grace is also necessary for the inward movement of persons toward God, and is even necessary for one's preparation for grace. (663) Here Thomas conjoins humans' free choice with God's motion and action; citing Jeremiah 31, he writes, "man's turning to God is by free choice, and thus man is bidden to turn himself to God. But free choice can be turned to God only when God turns it ..." (663) Humans also cannot "rise from sin" except through grace. They need God's aid to address the triple effect of sin: "stain," or the forfeit of the "adornment of grace"; the corruption of natural good; and the incurring of a debt that justly requires punishment. Here Thomas makes it clear that humans do not justify themselves from sin. (664)

The avoidance of sin was possible in the integral state without additional grace, although human nature depended upon God, even here, to be continuously sustained. Such avoidance requires additional grace after the Fall. With such grace it is possible for humans to abstain from mortal sin (which, in its dependence on reason, can be affected by the healing of reason). However, even though the reason "is restored by justifying grace," the reason does not persist in this, nor does it effectively control the

appetites and sensuality (the realm of venial sin). Thus grace must effect, again, a return of human reason to the healed state in order for sin to be avoided. (667)

Only God is capable of bestowing grace; this is beyond the power of created nature. (672)

Human preparation for grace does involve free choice, but, again, human free choice toward God is "moved," and is always inseparable from God as "mover." This is the basis for Thomas' answer to the question of whether those who prepare for grace necessarily receive it; since God is the mover, and "God's intention cannot fail," those whom God moves to preparation will receive grace. (676) Similarly, differences in grace among persons are based upon differences in preparation, but the source of these differences is God's action, "in order that the beauty and perfection of the church may result from these various degrees." (678) Finally, we can know of grace only imperfectly, unless God chooses to reveal the grace we have received in a special, clearer way. (679-80)

While Thomas Aquinas seems to clearly state the continuing human dependence on God's grace, the tension between the need for grace and the natural human capacity to know God, the natural law, and good ends and actions marks the more recent history of debates over natural theology. Karl Barth rejected natural law and theology as false, constructed knowledge of God, ignoring the human dependence on God's revelation and Christ as redeemer, while Reinhold Niebuhr argued that natural law was a fundamental distortion of the "law of love" in Christ and failed to recognize the realities of history.³ Even if we accept that human reason retains some natural capacity to know God and good ends, questions remain. First, how do we determine what qualifies as natural law and what does not? Aquinas describes natural law as the participation of eternal law in human reason, yet how do we discern what stands as natural law and what is merely entrenched custom? How do we judge the rightness of additions or alterations to natural law, both of which Thomas admits? Second, how does natural theology articulate the telos of human life? Ends, in Thomas' model (following Aristotle) are predicated

³ See Karl Barth, "Faith as Knowledge" in Dogmatics in Outline (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), p. 22-27, and the secondary discussions in Diogenes Allen, Philosophy for Understanding Theology (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985), p. 144-146 and B. F. Brown, "Natural Law: Contemporary Theology and Philosophy," in New Catholic Encyclopedia (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), p. 259-260.

on the nature of things. Is it possible, in a practical sense, to gain reliable knowledge of this telos or even gain functional consensus concerning what is “natural” and proper to humans? Finally, how can the Thomistic model and natural law and theology more generally shape ethical and public proclamation and advocacy by Christians? Are concepts such as “human rights,” which assume some universal standard and moral knowledge common to human beings, appropriately used and appealed for in specifically Christian terms? How does the language of “natural law,” rooted in God but given through reason, fit with religious claims that rest on a particular understanding of revelation and God’s action? These are beginning questions that may offer us some scope for discussion.

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PH 946: Philosophy in the Enlightenment

April 14, 1998

FAITH, REASON, AND CERTAINTY IN THE THOUGHT OF THOMAS AQUINAS

A synopsis of *Aquinas, Calvin and Contemporary Protestant Thought*, by Arvin Vos

The purpose of this essay is to explicate those portions of Arvin Vos's book, *Aquinas, Calvin, and Contemporary Protestant Thought*, which relate to the focus topic for this course—i.e., the nature and relation of faith and reason, with an examination of the notion of certainty. I begin with a summary of Vos's objective and thesis, as well as an outline of the book's composition and argument. Next, in the greater part of the essay, I turn my attention to Vos's treatment of Thomas Aquinas's (and to a lesser degree John Calvin's) account of faith, reason, and certainty. In a brief concluding section, I accent several of Vos's cursory references to the Enlightenment, Descartes, and Cartesian rationality in order to highlight his suggested contrast between pre- and post-Enlightenment rationality and its relation to faith. This essay is not a sequential exposition of Vos's text or thesis; rather, in addressing the relevant focus, I draw material systematically and topically. It is my hope that the result is true to Vos's argument, illuminating of Thomas and Calvin, and generative of fruitful class discussion.

VOS'S THESIS, OBJECTIVE, AND OUTLINE

Arvin Vos's primary thesis is that the assumptions on which most contemporary Protestants base their negative views of Thomas Aquinas are mistaken. His objectives are to demonstrate how and why Protestants have formulated their misinformed views of Aquinas, correct these misperceptions, and show "that Aquinas is important and relevant yet today" (p. ix). In short, Vos argues that due to ecclesiastical, philosophical, and traditional barriers, "most contemporary Protestants look only to the Reformers for a model in their theology, either ignoring Aquinas or using him as an example of how not to think theologically" (p. 174). He claims that even

those Protestants who recognizes the magnitude and brilliance of Thomas's "great synthesis," still claim that he was fundamentally wrong and misguided in his execution (pp. xii; 132).

By focusing on three major areas of Aquinas's thought—the meaning of faith, the relationship between natural and sacred theology, and the relationship between nature and grace—Vos seeks to demonstrate that Protestant views are based largely on ignorance of Thomas's actual writings. In each of these three areas he proceeds by summarizing the predominate Protestant criticisms of Aquinas, then demonstrates how these are views are mistaken, and frequently shows the surprisingly similar positions of Aquinas and Calvin (for whom Aquinas and the schoolmen were the great nemeses).

Vos begins with a comparison of Calvin's and Aquinas's definitions of faith and argues that, despite initial appearances, they are actually quite similar. In chapter two, he turns to Calvin's objection to the scholastic notions of "implicit faith" and the distinction between "formed" and "unformed" faith, arguing that Aquinas's understanding of these terms are quite different from the later schoolmen against whom Calvin is arguing. Chapter three, and a brief excursus, addresses the evidentialist/fideist and foundationalist controversies. Vos concludes that Aquinas is a fideist and a foundationalist. Given, however, that I consider this section of the book to be poorly structured, the content of Vos's argument is of greater significance than his conclusion. In chapters four and five, Vos turns to the relationship between faith and reason (philosophy and theology) through a discussion of Aquinas's preambles of faith, articles of faith, and his proofs of God's existence. I discuss these chapters in detail below. After a brief excursus on Calvin and natural theology, Vos turns to a discussion of the relationship between nature and grace, demonstrating why a right understanding of these concepts is essential to a proper appreciation of Aquinas's thought.

FAITH, REASON, AND CERTAINTY

Vos chooses to focus on the issue of faith due to its importance for the Reformers and for a proper understanding of Aquinas. He asserts that Protestants, who tend to focus on Thomas's use of natural theology (i.e., philosophy), have largely ignored his views on faith. In this section, I examine Thomas's views on faith and reason, as well as his similarities and differences to Calvin. I proceed by explicating Vos's interpretation of Calvin's and Aquinas's definitions of *faith*, with attention to *knowledge* and *belief*. I follow this with a discussion of Thomas's account of *reason* and its relation to faith and theology. Finally, I explicate Aquinas's understanding of certainty and its relation to faith and reason.

Aquinas and Calvin on Faith

Vos begins his discussion of faith by noting that the issue of *knowledge* appears to be the essential point of division between Calvin and Aquinas on the subject of faith. He maintains, however, that the division between them exists almost entirely in the meaning they confer to the term "knowledge" rather than in the meaning of faith itself. "Consequently," Vos argues, "Calvin's 'firm and certain knowledge' is in substance identical with Aquinas's view that faith is a firm belief" (p. 4). How is this the case?

According to Vos, faith for Calvin consists more in assurance than in comprehension and is more a matter of heart (i.e., will) than of mind. Faith is beyond the comprehension of our minds; nevertheless, Calvin claims that our knowledge of faith is greater than our comprehension of faith, and that the limited way in which we "understand" faith does not make it any less a genuine form of knowledge. Faith as knowledge is available only from God, who illumines our minds and transforms our hearts in such a way that we become *assured* (i.e., we truly *know*) of God's benevolence towards us. In brief, our knowledge of God's benevolence towards us (which

is the primary *content* of faith) is worked in us by God notwithstanding our inability to *comprehend* (i.e., to know by demonstration, observation of our senses, or the use of our natural reason) the content of faith.

Aquinas, on the other hand, refuses to affirm that faith is knowledge; this is, however, because of the meaning he assigns to the word *knowledge*. Thomas, unlike Calvin, has no conception of knowledge as assurance. Rather, knowledge for Aquinas is scientific—i.e., that which is *demonstrable by reason* and which results in a complete and clear *comprehension* of the object being considered. In short, knowledge for Aquinas appears indistinguishable from the notion of knowledge as comprehension, which Calvin himself explicitly rejects as the basis of faith.

Aquinas, like Calvin, denies that humankind can possess a scientific knowledge of faith; rather, humankind exists in a state similar to that of *doubt* or *opinion* relative to God and faith. This state is, however, wholly different from a state of doubt or opinion, because, despite one's inability to actually possess scientific understanding, one is as assured of God's existence and providence as one who possesses scientific understanding. In other words, we *believe* what we do not fully *know* or understand. How is this possible? Aquinas answers that through voluntary choice the will compels the intellect to assent—i.e., to believe, to have faith. In Thomas's terms, the will commands the intellect to believe in God as God reveals God's self through "the Prophets and Apostles who wrote the canonical books" (*ST*, 1a. 1, 8 ad 2 m). Hence, "God is not only that which is known, the material object of faith, he is also the medium through which faith's material object is known, the formal object of faith" (p. 13). Finally, lest Aquinas be accused of the Pelagian claim that the power to force the mind to assent means that faith begins in human free will, Aquinas decisively states that "in assenting to the things of faith a person is raised above his own nature, . . . [which] has as its cause God, moving us inwardly through grace" (*ST*, 2a2ae. 6, 1).

For both Calvin and Aquinas before him, the will (i.e., heart) is of essential significance in providing the assurance of faith, and for both alike, the movement of the will is solely the work of God.¹ Their similarities continue when one notes that each considers scripture the authoritative source of God's self-revelation. For Aquinas, the authority of scripture moves the will and feeds the intellect, and for Calvin, scripture nourishes the heart and illumines the mind. In both cases alike, one comes to believe (i.e., have faith) through God's revelation that God is benevolent towards humankind. Whereas at first the difference between Aquinas and Calvin appears substantial, Vos argues that the differences actually exist almost entirely at the level of language rather than content. Though their methods are quite distinct, their conclusions are very similar: for both, faith is sure and confident despite our understanding of faith being incomplete and cloudy.

*Aquinas on the Relation of Faith
and Reason (Philosophy & Theology)*

The contemporary Protestant disagreement with the theological and philosophical system of Aquinas is grounded, Vos claims, "less on Aquinas's account of faith than on his view of the relation of reason to faith" (p. 41). According to Vos, many Protestants maintain that Aquinas relies too heavily on the power of human reason, resulting in a subordination of revelation to reason, which makes reason a precondition of faith (p. 67ff.), and results in an inadequate concept of God and of human nature (p. 134ff.). Common targets for Protestants included Thomas's preambles of faith, his understanding of the role and place of natural theology, and his proofs of God's existence. Against such interpretations, Vos argues that Thomas does not compromise revelation because of reason, that he explicitly denies that the preambles are necessary preconditions of faith, and that natural theology "has a purely subservient, clarifying role, for sacred theology ac-

¹ In order not to be misunderstood, I should clarify that "faith" for Aquinas is an act of the mind or the intellect. He specifically argues against the claim that faith is primarily an act of the will. The point being made here,

cepts it principles immediately from God" (p. 83). Aquinas himself makes it clear that "error arises, if, in matters of faith reason has precedence of faith and not faith of reason, to the point that one would be willing to believe only what he could know by reason, when the converse ought to be the case" (*DT*, 2, 1 obj. 1, resp.). To understand why this is so, a better understanding of Aquinas's conception of reason and its relation to faith is required.

Vos begins his discussion of the relation of faith and reason in Aquinas by examining Aquinas's claim that "God exists." He argues that belief in God is basic and necessary to Aquinas's understanding of faith and that—contrary to Protestant misperception—belief in God can be accepted without evidence or demonstration; hence, Thomas's claim that "faith is called a consent without inquiry in so far as the consent, or assent, is not caused by an investigation of the understanding" (*Truth*, q. 14, a. 1. ad 2m). What Protestants frequently misunderstand, however, is how "God exists" can function as both an *article of faith* and a *preamble of faith*. As an article of faith, belief in God consists of assurance and certainty of God's existence through the assent of the intellect to the will by the grace of God (as we saw above). Such assent is an act of faith and requires no evidence. As a preamble of faith, God's existence is rationally provable by those with the ability and time to reflect and investigate the subject of God's existence. In this latter case, the object moves one's intellect, i.e., one's intellect becomes convinced of God's existence by assenting to the soundness of rationally demonstrable proofs. In this way, "the existence of God can be affirmed on two different bases" (p. 82).

The claim that God can be affirmed on two different bases becomes confusing (and in many cases incendiary), because of Thomas's assertion that the preambles of faith are a "prerequisite to the truth of faith" and are presupposed by the articles of faith.² On initial observation

however, is that the mind is inspired or compelled to assent due to a (grace inspired) act of the will.

² See *ST*, 2a2ae. 1, 6 ad 3m and *Truth*, q. 14, 9 ad 8m.

such claims make rationally demonstrable proofs (i.e., the preambles) appear necessary before one can have faith. Vos argues that this is not the case. By maintaining that the articles of faith presuppose the preambles of faith, Aquinas means that they are implicit in the *content* of the articles of faith. For example, the claims that God is Trinity and that the Son of God was incarnate (both *articles of faith* which are above reason) presuppose in their very structure the existence of God (a *preamble of faith*). The preambles, however, are in no way a precondition for the *act of faith*, because—though they are rationally demonstrable realities—they are accessible by the divine light of faith to all who cannot attain them by the natural light of reason.

Vos devotes a great deal of attention to correcting what he considers misperceptions of Thomas's claim that "God exists" and his formulation of the preambles and articles of faith, because these reflect and reveal Thomas's understanding of the possibilities and limits of human reason. While Aquinas is clear that reasoning for the sake of finding grounds for belief takes "away from the merit of faith," he is equally affirming that human reason is appropriate in exploring truth that has been accepted in faith; indeed, reason used in this latter fashion "is a sign of greater merit" (*ST*, 2a2ae. 2, 10). Whenever possible, human nature leads us to seek to understand what we already believe (p. 113). By claiming that reason should be used to help understand what we accept through revelation, Aquinas subsumes philosophy within theology, equating philosophical reflection with natural theology, bringing it under the captivity and obedience of Christ (II Cor. 10:5), and making it the "handmaiden of theology."

Aquinas is able to subsume natural theology (i.e., those truths available by the natural light of reason) under sacred theology because of his understanding that all truth is ultimately one; therefore, two truths cannot contradict each other and must be complementary. Aquinas states his position succinctly in a passage from the *Summa Contra Gentiles*: "while the truth of

Christian faith exceeds the capacity of human reason, truths that reason is fitted by nature to know cannot be contrary to the truth of faith. The things that reason is fitted by nature to know are clearly most true, and it would be impossible to think of them as false" (SCG, I. 7). Hence, natural theology makes use of natural reason to help clarify and illuminate what is known by revelation.

What, one might ask, is one to do if natural theology (i.e., reason) and revealed theology (i.e., faith) conflict? This question does not present a serious problem for Aquinas because of his belief that the knowledge of God attainable by the natural light of reason "is limited for several reasons—partially because of the limitations inherent in the things known by reason and partially because of the limitations of the human intellect itself" (p. 96). The limitations of natural reason are threefold: (1) we have imperfect knowledge of natural things; (2) we cannot properly grasp the natural order because we cannot know God's providence; (3) there is no proportion between humanity and God, therefore, even if our knowledge were perfect, we still would not be able to comprehend God.

For Aquinas it is important *how* one comes to know God. Vos writes: "It is Aquinas's contention that knowledge of God gained through natural reason differs in both its content and its basis from what is known through faith" (p. 99). The key difference between the two methods of inquiry is that philosophy knows of God only through God's effects in nature. The most one can know of God through observation and reason is that God is the cause of what one observes. Hence, the best picture one can draw of God from natural reason is the First Mover of Creation, i.e., the top story of the pyramid of creation.³ It is not only the different methods, however, which

³ I think that Vos misrepresents Aquinas on this point. While his underlying point about philosophical knowledge and revealed knowledge is valid, he is inaccurate in claiming that the "best" natural theology can generate is Aristotle's unmoved mover. For a better treatment of the "best" notion of God that can be derived from natural theology, see Allen's *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*, pp. 137-144.

result in differing understandings of God. Natural theology is further limited by the fact that human intellect is incapable of an accurate knowledge of nature. This is partly because of the finitude of human senses and intellect and partly because of the "wound of ignorance" resulting from the Fall, which deprived reason "of its direction towards truth" (p. 145). Moreover, because God is transcendent beyond proportion, "even if we knew the ways themselves perfectly we would yet not have within our grasp a perfect knowledge of the source" (SCG, 4, 1, 3).

Revealed theology, on the other hand, accesses the way in which God manifests and reveals God's self. For believers—that is, through faith—God is not apprehended as the principle cause of creation; rather, God is the *object* of knowing and loving (p. 104). Hence, Vos can claim that "by working through to the conclusions of natural theology, believers can supplement their knowledge of things grasped by faith without any risk of making revealed theology dependent on or subordinate to natural theology" (p. 112).

Before turning to the topic of certainty, a brief comparison of Calvin and Aquinas may help to clarify the position of each. According to Vos, one finds very little difference in the basic understanding of reason in Calvin and Aquinas. Calvin clearly recognizes a "natural instinct" or "awareness of divinity" in the human person (*Inst.* 1.3.1). He claims, however, that such knowledge is prone to error and cannot arrive at an accurate knowledge of God. As we have seen, Aquinas also holds that the knowledge of God available to philosophers cannot be equated with the Christian God, who is not a being among beings, but rather is being itself. For both Calvin and Aquinas, God must reveal any true knowledge of God's essence or providence. Despite this similarity, Vos notes that Aquinas and Calvin stake very different positions on the question of the use of philosophy for theological inquiry:

For Calvin the fact that the philosophers have only a glimmer of the truth is reason enough to abandon them and look solely to Scripture for the truth; for Aquinas, however, the fact that there is a glimmer of truth among the philosophers is reason enough

to gather what they have found so that it may be perfected and completed, to find its place in the whole. Calvin concentrates on showing that the philosophers cannot give what faith requires. Aquinas agrees, but adds, with Augustine, 'If the philosophers have by chance uttered truths helpful to our faith, they are not only not to be feared, but rather those truths ought to be taken from them as from unjust possessors and used to our advantage.' [p. 120]

Vos concludes that while Calvin's position may have protected Christianity from some mistakes, it has also cost Calvin and his followers the great benefit of philosophical insight in their theological reflection.

Reason, Faith, and Certainty in Thomas Aquinas

In light of the above discussion, Thomas's views on certainty and its relation to faith and reason can be quickly summarized. As we saw above, Aquinas accepts Augustine's definition of faith as "thinking with assent." Within this definition, Aquinas claims that belief is a "second act" of the understanding (p. 47). A first act of understanding is simply getting things into view. This is the process of conceiving or forming concepts. A second act of understanding "is a matter of judging, an assertion about the way things are, and its product is a proposition" (p. 48). A second act of understanding involves claims of truth or falsity, whereas a first act of understanding does not. Following this pattern, Vos writes: "Believing is not just a matter of having an idea (though it most certainly includes this, for a belief has a content); it also involves an affirmation or denial about some aspect of reality" (p. 48).

Within such affirmation or denial there are degrees of *certitude* which are proportional to evidence: (a) doubt, (b) opinion, (c) certitude. Certitude is itself further divided into three varieties. First, there is certitude as a result of an intelligible object acting *immediately* on the intellect to induce consent. When an object acts *immediately*, "there is no need to go through any process of reasoning; from the understanding of the terms one sees immediately the truth of, for example,

a principle" (p. 51). Secondly, there is certitude as a result of an object acting *mediately* on the intellect to induce assent. When an object acts *mediately*, some process of reasoning is involved through which one attains certitude of the proposition; according to Thomas: "This is the state of one who has science" (*Truth*, 14, 1). In both of these cases assent is given or denied based on the evidence. The third variety of certitude is not, however, based on an intellectual assent to the evidence, but rather involves an assent of the intellect to the will. "This determination involves neither a grasp of principles nor a demonstration based on principles, and yet there is certitude nevertheless" (p. 51). This is faith.

Whether certitude is gained by an assent of the intellect to evidence or an assent of the intellect to the will, its character is the same—"namely, that the intellect 'is so determined that it adheres to one member without reservation'" (p. 50). Certitude, however, is of two types: certitude of assent to evidence and certitude to adherence of belief. Moreover, each form of certitude has a different effect on the intellect. With scientific knowledge, the reasoning process concludes when assent occurs, but with belief it does not. Because assent is the *final step* in scientific knowledge, once one assents to the evidence, thought comes to rest (i.e., the demands of reason have been satisfied, and one is certain). In matters of faith, however, assent is the *first step* and is not caused by thought or evidence; hence, "understanding does not achieve sight of its object and thereby come to rest; rather it continues to inquire about that to which it assents with certitude" (53). In this way, Aquinas's position could aptly be described as *faith seeking understanding*.

Lastly, certitude is related to the object of study. Vos writes:

With regard to firmness of adherence, [Aquinas] states, "faith is more certain than any understanding of principles and scientific knowledge. For the first truth, which causes the assent of faith, is a more powerful cause than the light of reason, which causes the assent of understanding or scientific knowledge (*Truth*, 14, 1 ad 7m). With regard to evidence, however, he concedes that "faith does not have certainty, but scientific knowledge and understanding do" (*Truth*, 14, 1 ad 7m). [p. 54]

VOS'S CONTRAST BETWEEN PRE-ENLIGHTENMENT & POST-ENLIGHTENMENT RATIONALITY

Given that Vos makes only three references to Descartes and Cartesian thought in his entire text (pp. 64, 92, & 115), it is admittedly a bit absurd to pretend to present "Vos's contrast between pre-Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment rationality." Nevertheless, given the emphasis of the course, it may be worth the effort to extract as much as possible from his references. Hence, I'll give it a shot.

Vos maintains that Cartesian rationality was partly responsible for the thomistic shift of emphasis from the content of faith to the act of faith itself. Whereas Aquinas was assured of the complementarity of faith and reason, and claimed that reason functioned to help illuminate truths accepted through revelation, many seventeenth century Thomists began to shift their focus to a rational justification for the act of believing itself. According to Vos, this shift was largely a response to Descartes's focus on the problem of the criterion of knowledge (p. 92). Moreover, most contemporary Catholics and Protestants continue to be "preoccupied with giving arguments that rationally justify the act of believing" (p. 93). The irony of this shift of emphasis in light of Protestant criticisms of Aquinas is striking. That is, Aquinas has routinely been charged with making the preambles of faith rational preconditions to faith by persons who have been so influenced by Cartesian rationality that they could scarcely have interpreted him otherwise. This post-Enlightenment mindset, Vos claims, is largely responsible for both Catholic misappropriation of Aquinas's thought and Protestant misconception of Aquinas's views.

I close with Vos's other observation, which speaks for itself:

It is my contention that Aquinas's views differ from much if not most of modern and contemporary thought not because he holds that there are both basic and derived elements in each field but rather because he holds that there are both distinct types of principles and principles specific to each of the sciences. Ever since Descartes, modern philosophy has been obsessed with a desire to erect the edifice of human knowledge on a single, unitary basis. Such a desire is quite foreign to Aquinas, who maintains that there are distinct sciences, each with its own method and principles, as well as an overarching science, metaphysics, which comprises principles common to the other sciences. [p. 64]